

# *UMass Lowell*

MAGAZINE FOR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS

**IS  
COLLEGE  
WORTH  
IT?**

As more families question the value, UMass Lowell is shaping itself into a top-notch return on investment. Page 26



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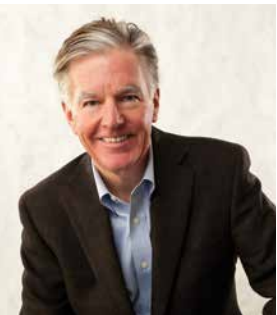
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A Message From  
**Chancellor Martin T. Meehan '78**



It's been quite a year.

In just a little over 12 months, we opened or broke ground on six new buildings, moved all sports up to Division I and celebrated record enrollment and graduation rates. We like to say that UMass Lowell is rising, and everywhere you look, that's true. Our test scores, our endowment, our alumni salaries—everything is up.

People outside of Lowell are noticing. National and international ranking experts are calling us a top value. They say we're one of the best returns on investment in the country. In just one year, U.S. News & World Report moved us up 12 spots in its national ranking of top-tier universities; our rise over the last three years is the second largest among all top-tier universities in the country.

Recently, we celebrated with some ads (like the one below) in major publications. In addition to local outlets, you may have seen us in The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal and Time magazine.



The ads ask, "Is college worth it?" In this issue of the magazine, we provide some answers.

Students and families are not taking the soaring costs of higher education lightly—and nor should they. Before a student decides to take this path, she must be secure in the knowledge that a college education is a good life decision. She must know that the experience will provide invaluable lessons and opportunities, which, together, will allow her to succeed in every area of her life in the years following.

At UMass Lowell we are in the business of making sure that's the case. At UMass Lowell, college is worth it.

But don't take my word for it. Turn the page and see for yourself.

Martin T. Meehan  
Chancellor

# UMass Lowell

MAGAZINE FOR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS

## Cover Story



Nearly 90 percent of students say they attend college to have "a better chance for a good job." But student loan debt recently reached \$1 trillion in the United States. It's not surprising, then, that prospective college students and their parents are increasingly weighing the relative value of a college education. What is it worth—and is it worth emerging from the cocoon of university life swathed in deep debt, without job prospects? Sometimes, the answer is no.

But at UMass Lowell that's not the case. We're affordable and we offer a top-notch education that external experts are calling one of the best values in the country. Entrepreneurship. Global opportunities. Co-ops and internships. Ground breaking research. Students get invaluable experience and practical training while they're here—so that when we send them out into the world they're ready for anything. Read all about it, starting on page 26.

# 26

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**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Please send comments to Editor Sarah McAdams Corbett at Sarah\_Corbett@uml.edu. Submit class notes to: Class Notes Editor, Alumni Center, One Perkins St., Lowell, MA 01854 or online at [www.uml.edu/advancement/classnotes](http://www.uml.edu/advancement/classnotes).



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LOWELL TEXTILE SCHOOL • MASSACHUSETTS STATE NORMAL SCHOOL • STATE TEACHERS COLLEGE AT LOWELL • LOWELL TEXTILE INSTITUTE  
LOWELL TECHNOLOGICAL INSTITUTE • MASSACHUSETTS STATE COLLEGE AT LOWELL • LOWELL STATE COLLEGE • UNIVERSITY OF LOWELL





# Fenway: Frozen?

The hockey team faced off against the Northeastern Huskies at “America’s Most Beloved Ballpark” on Jan. 11. “Slushy” was a better word to describe the ice on that rainy and warm Saturday afternoon, and the conditions weren’t on the River Hawks’ side. UMass Lowell lost 4-1. Nonetheless, “I’ll never forget this game,” says senior center Joe Pendenza. “It was incredible to play in the same place the Red Sox won the World Series.”



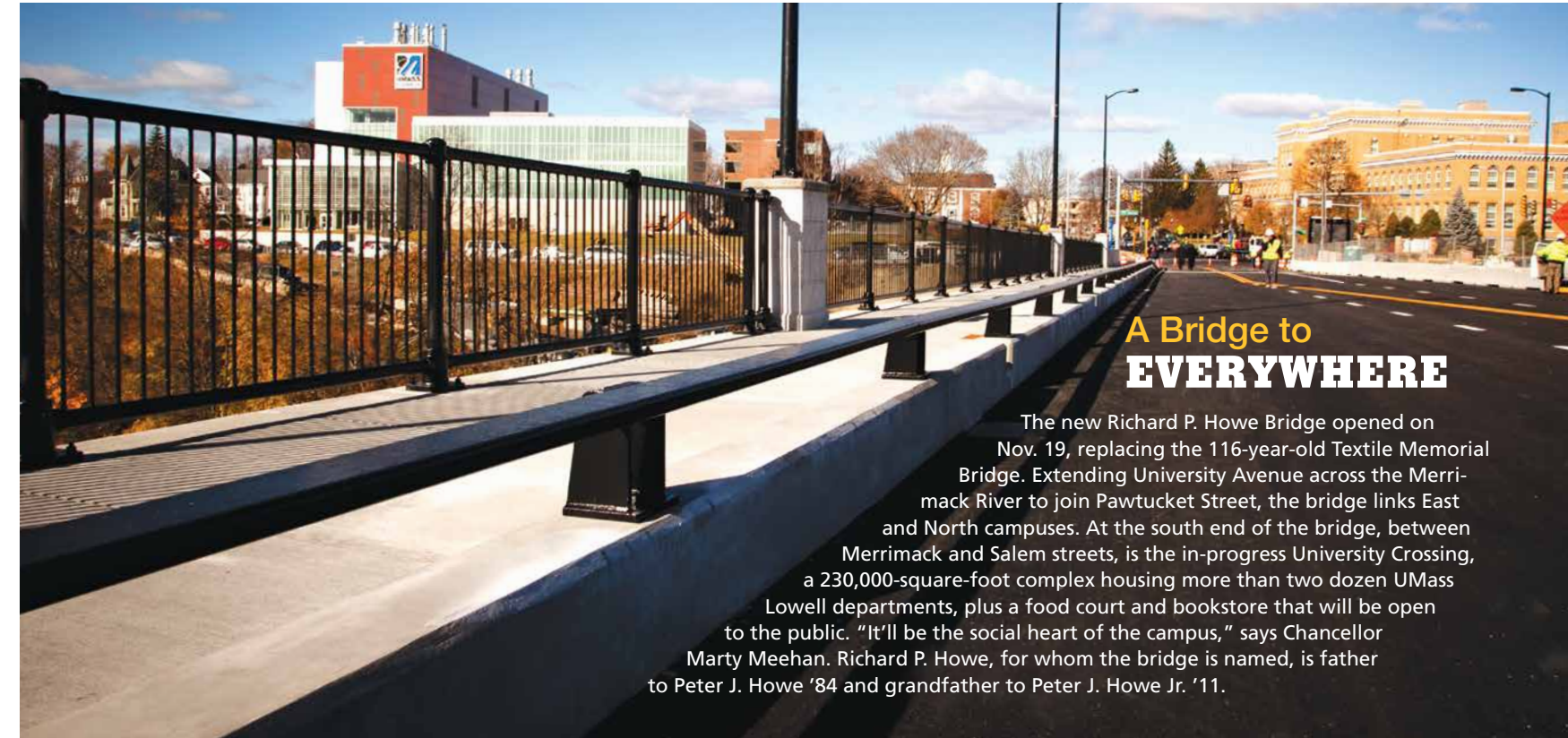
# Campus Life

## Inside...

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### GOOD CLEAN FUN

Junior electrical engineering major Thomas Marsh works on some chords while he passes the time waiting for his laundry to dry. Every space in the new University Suites residence hall on East Campus is modern and bright, including the ground floor laundry room.



### A Bridge to EVERYWHERE

The new Richard P. Howe Bridge opened on Nov. 19, replacing the 116-year-old Textile Memorial Bridge. Extending University Avenue across the Merrimack River to join Pawtucket Street, the bridge links East and North campuses. At the south end of the bridge, between Merrimack and Salem streets, is the in-progress University Crossing, a 230,000-square-foot complex housing more than two dozen UMass Lowell departments, plus a food court and bookstore that will be open to the public. "It'll be the social heart of the campus," says Chancellor Marty Meehan. Richard P. Howe, for whom the bridge is named, is father to Peter J. Howe '84 and grandfather to Peter J. Howe Jr. '11.

### FOX 25 Broadcasts from Campus

Boston's FOX 25 Morning News team spent a morning at UMass Lowell in November, as part of the program's six-campus College Tour of New England. The show—which featured alumna and Fox meteorologist Sarah Wroblewski '05—was broadcast live from the lawn of the Campus Recreation Center.



Photo: Tory Germann

### 15 Years of Women and Work

The Center for Women and Work at UMass Lowell Women celebrated its 15th anniversary with a Women's Works Fair on Dec. 5, which featured handmade crafts and musical performances.







Student veteran Brandon Geisler spent six months at a co-op at NetScout Systems in Westford.

Student Vets Get Wired for Work

When Brandon Geisler received a medical discharge from the job he loved as a U.S. Marine drill instructor, he felt unmoored. Geisler, who served from 2001 to 2006, hadn't contemplated a career apart from the Marines.

He bounced from unemployment to roofing to installing cable and then returned to school to pursue a degree in information technology. After earning his associate's degree from Northern Essex Community College, he transferred to UMass Lowell.

Geisler found success in the classroom but his resume was lacking professional high-tech experience. When he heard about a new co-op work program specifically for student veterans, Geisler was quick to apply. He was accepted into the program and spent six months working full-time at NetScout Systems, a Westford-based networking software firm.

"This is exactly what I was looking for," says Geisler, who expects to earn his bachelor's degree in September 2014. "I'm getting the professional experience that I was missing."

Geisler and three other UMass Lowell student veterans are the first participants in the Wired for Work initiative, a unique pilot program that seeks to decrease unemployment among veterans and prepare

them for technology careers. Launched last year, the program is a partnership between the Chirag Foundation, NetScout and UMass Lowell. Students get hands-on job training through paid six-month co-op placements. At the same time, a pipeline of highly skilled candidates for tech-sector jobs is established.

The program took root when NetScout CEO Anil Singhal and his wife, Abha, who are Chirag Foundation trustees, were looking for a way to address joblessness among veterans.

A state veteran services official directed the Singhals to UMass Lowell, which has been recognized for its support for veterans and is home to a growing co-op education program. For Abha Singhal, it was a return to familiar ground: She earned an MBA from the University in 1988.

The University's Office of Veterans Services helped recruit students and the Career Services and Cooperative Education Center created a professional development seminar to prepare the student veterans for the job market.

The Chirag Foundation and NetScout have committed to the pilot for at least three years. The plan is to gradually build the program. Anil Singhal believes it could be a model for other private businesses in Massachusetts and around the country. —JG

NEW PHARMACEUTICAL GRAD PROGRAMS AIM TO FILL VITAL WORKFORCE NEED

UMass Lowell is the first public university in Massachusetts to offer graduate degrees in pharmaceutical sciences. The new master's and doctoral degrees are designed to meet the growing demand for pharmaceutical scientists who discover, develop, test and manufacture medications.

The Massachusetts Board of Higher Education recently approved the University's new pharmaceutical sciences programs, which will be the only public programs in the Commonwealth. Courses in the programs will begin September 2014. The program will also involve affiliated faculty from UMass Medical School.

"UMass Lowell is in a unique position because of its existing programs in nanotechnology, clinical laboratory sciences, genomics and chemistry to prepare students for both research and leadership careers developing new methods of drug discovery and delivery," says Shortie McKinney, dean of UMass Lowell's College of Health Sciences.

The new programs will help fill a vital workforce need in the high-tech biopharmaceutical industry. Federal and state data projects a 17 percent growth rate in the pharmaceutical industry through 2018, but Massachusetts faces national and global competition to fill the jobs created by expansion of the industry.

UNIVERSITY RANKINGS:

UMass Lowell is in the top tier of universities in the nation for the fourth consecutive time, climbing a dozen spots since last year and 25 since 2011 in U.S. News & World Report's annual ranking of institutions of higher education. The University is No. 158 on the 2014 list of Best National Universities, up from 170 last year. The University's three-year jump is the second-largest among all universities. UMass Lowell continues to be among the top 100 public universities in the nation, rising to No. 85 on the list this year.



From Donuts to Descartes

Philosophy prof. John Kaag was bored during a session at a conference about renowned philosopher William James in Chocorua, N.H. To pass the time, so he walked to a bakery, struck up a conversation with a guy, and then found himself at the door of a personal library filled with first editions from Hobbes, Locke, Kant and Descartes.

"I met a man named Bunn Nickerson, who'd once farmed the estate of W.E. Hocking, also a noted philosopher, and one of my scholarly interests," says Kaag.

"After chatting, he asked if I wanted to see West Wind, Hocking's massive estate in nearby Madison," says Kaag.

There, in an unheated, free-standing library, were hundreds of rare books, many handed down from James to his protégé, Hocking. Kaag began to look through them, taking in the notes (or "marginalia") James and others made in reaction to the greats of Western philosophy.

Kaag's serendipitous 2008 trip to West Wind will soon reap benefits for the University and philosophy scholars worldwide, as Hocking's granddaughters—Penelope Hocking, Jillian Farwell and Jennifer Wiley—agreed to donate a selection of the collection to UMass Lowell.

"I got to know the Hocking family, and my partner (Prof. Carol Hay, also of the Philosophy Department) and I spent weekends cataloguing the works and moving them to dry storage before the family kindly decided to donate them to the University," says Kaag.

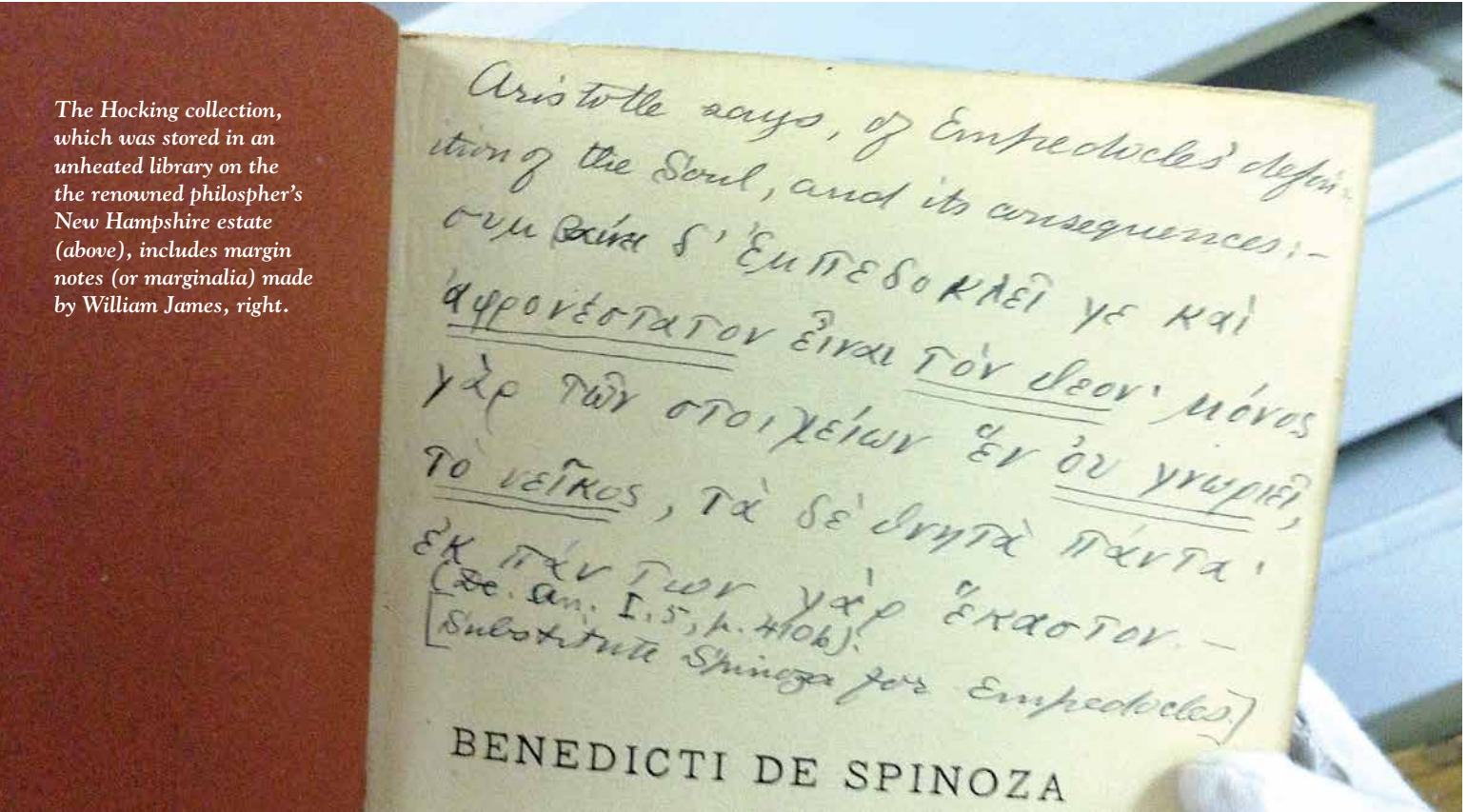


Kaag and Hay used funds they received through a Healey Grant to have the works—which also included William James' marginalia from his copies of Nietzsche, Kant and Hegel, and 30 volumes of noted Idealist philosopher James Royce—professionally appraised. During one of these working weekends, Hay discovered an anonymous first edition of John Locke's 1690 "Two Treatises on Government" and Descartes' 1649 "Discourse on Method," the book that first gave us "I think therefore I am."

"These books—and especially the handwritten insights into how the giants of philosophy felt about each other's work—are the tip of a very large and complex history," says Kaag, who is in the process of writing about the library in a book called "Finding West Wind."

Some of the collection will be displayed at a July event at the UMass Lowell Inn & Conference Center marking the 100th anniversary of the death of C.S. Peirce, a founder of the American philosophical tradition. More than 200 scholars from around the world plan to attend.

"This collection will put UMass Lowell on the map in terms of archival research in the humanities," says Mark Reimer, executive director of special initiatives. "Such editions are housed only at the most prestigious universities—for example, only Harvard, Yale, Stanford, Wellesley and a small handful of other institutions have first editions of Hobbes' 'Leviathan'." —SE



The Hocking collection, which was stored in an unheated library on the the renowned philosopher's New Hampshire estate (above), includes margin notes (or marginalia) made by William James, right.



# Anatomy of the ‘Perfect Athlete’

In a Nod to the 2014 Sochi Olympics, UMass Lowell Experts Deconstruct the Ideal Competitor

## VISUALIZES WINNING

Michael E. Jones, legal studies professor, triathlete and former elite swimmer:

“In 2008, I had a chance to spend time with Michael Phelps before the Beijing Olympic Games and chat about his approach to competing and his role in Olympic history. He was tenacious in practice. He never liked losing even while swimming fun practice sets. Every swimming stroke Michael took was measured for success. He believed in himself. He trusted his coaches and teammates. He set no limits. He visualized success. He imagined winning eight gold medals in Beijing. The very best athletes have an ability to adjust to obstacles and not let the pressure of the moment spoil the race.”

## TRAINS MORE THAN HER BODY

Jim Graves, adjunct professor of sports psychology:

“Many athletes have the raw talent that could blossom into Olympic talent. Most do not. Olympians train their mind (focus and discipline), their heart (emotions) and their spirit (values) every bit as rigorously as their physical skills. That’s what makes them stand apart.”



## HAS EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

Ruben Sanca ‘09, ‘10, Olympian runner in 2012:

“The path to achieving the Olympic dream is not a straight line. There are ups and downs. Wins and losses. Having a strong support group of friends and family is a game-changer for many athletes as we face many obstacles on a monthly, or sometimes daily, basis while training. While we grow as athletes, we learn to keep things in perspective by sharing those experiences with others.”

## BUILDS STRENGTH AND MUSCLE

Devan McConnell, director of sports performance for UMass Lowell athletics:

“To compete at the highest level, elite skill in one’s particular sport is not enough. Performance training is all about improving an athlete’s ability to express that skill. Every sport is different, but in general, a stronger athlete is a more powerful athlete. A more powerful athlete is then a faster athlete. And if that athlete is properly conditioned to be able to express that speed and skill over and over, he is generally a ‘better’ athlete. If I were developing a training program for one of this year’s Olympic athletes, it would look something like three or four performance training sessions per week. The specific demands of the sport would dictate how and what we would do, but total body strength and power would be a general theme, focusing on single leg strength, core stability and injury prevention.”

## PRIORITIZES DIET AND NUTRITION

Michael Dellogono ‘11, ‘13, Ph.D. student in biomedical engineering and biotechnology :

“One of the most important aspects in training is diet and nutrition. Intense training essentially breaks the body down and it is crucial that athletes be able to recover as efficiently as possible. Proper diet and nutrition allow them to recover and continue to push themselves physically. The importance of diet and nutrition is amplified in elite competition where fractions of a second can be the difference between Silver or Gold. Athletes striving to perform at their absolute best must have year-round diligence and dedication to the goal.”

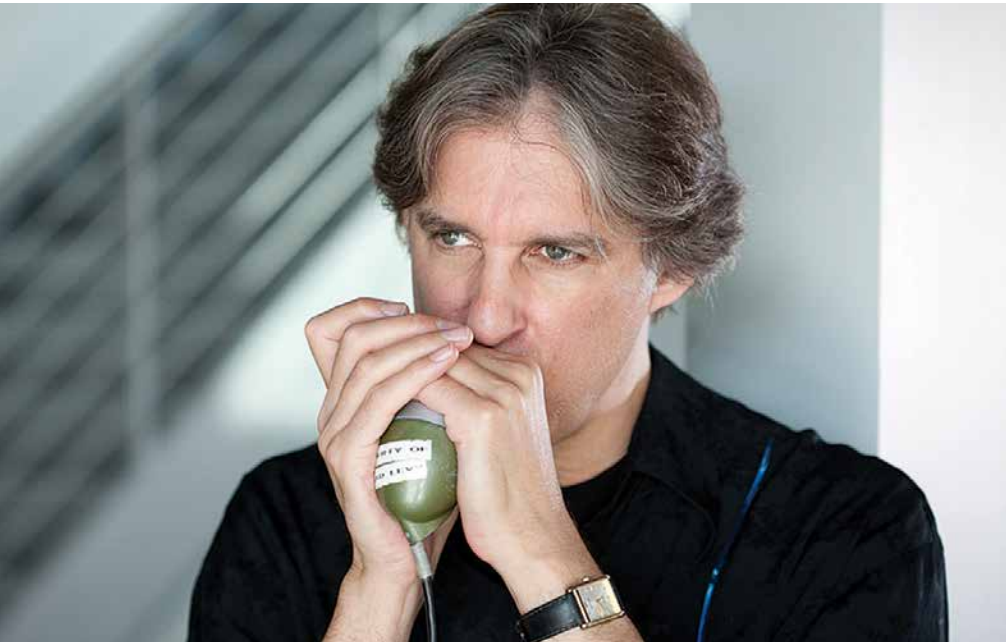
## MANAGES SPORTS INJURY

Tim DiFrancesco ‘06, head strength and condition coach, L.A. Lakers:

“It’s a shame when a silly injury prevents an athlete from reaching a gold medal. The body performs best when it achieves the highest state of symmetry—all parts working together. I compare it to car performance. If three tires are working perfectly, but the fourth is flat, you’re not going anywhere. And if you hit the same potholes driving your car to work every day, it’s not the 100th time that blows the tire, it’s the 99 times leading up to it. Overuse injuries can be prevented with things like good nutrition, icing and stretching. But the most important tool in letting the body recover and regenerate is probably sleep. Very few people, including athletes, do a good job sleeping at night.”

*After spending most of 2013 recovering from hip surgery, U.S. women’s hockey forward Amanda Kessel, 22, had already made two Olympic goals as of press time. Team USA—which took home silver in 2010—was set to play against Canada in the gold medal game on Feb. 20.*





## Flecktones’ Founder Howard Levy Shows Students How It’s Done

He says it’s the only instrument the performer and the audience can’t see while it’s being played—and that fact, among others—fueled Howard Levy’s fascination with the harmonica. Levy picked up the instrument as a teenager longing to learn to play the Chicago blues and went on to co-found the band Bela Fleck and the Flecktones. Critics have called him “a revelation” and “the most radical single technical innovator” in the history of the instrument.

The Grammy Award-winning instrumentalist, composer, producer and teacher visited UMass Lowell recently, giving a concert that featured a piano duet with Levy and Meg Ruby, who teaches piano at UMass Lowell. Another highlight was the world premiere of “8-Bit Attitude,” a composition for digitally processed harmonica written by John Shirley, chairman of the Music Department.

“Howard is an amazing musician and highly collaborative,” Shirley says. “I am honored that he thinks so highly of my music, completely out of his normal working genres, that he’d ask me to compose something for him.”

While on campus for four days, Levy also gave master classes for music students.

### BUSINESS SCHOOL LAUNCHES PH.D. PROGRAM

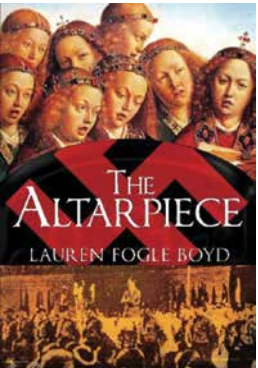
The Manning School of Business launched a new Ph.D. program this fall, attracting students from around the globe.

Eight different countries are represented in the program’s student body, including Turkey, Saudi Arabia, China, India and Vietnam. Students can choose concentrations from among accounting, finance, technology management, management information systems and leadership.

The high level of interest in the program exceeded expectations, says Scott Latham, associate dean of the Ph.D. program. “There’s a huge difference in being a Ph.D.-granting institution,” he says. “It’s about being a thought leader.”

### HISTORIAN PENS NOVEL ABOUT NAZI ART THEFTS

Anke Junger and Erik Brossler are fictional characters, but their story illustrates the systematic art theft and destruction perpetrated by the Third Reich and, later, the efforts to make things right.



While History Department adjunct professor Lauren Fogle Boyd is a medieval historian, she was inspired to write a historical novel, “The Altarpiece,” after seeing “The Rape of Europa,” which details the widespread theft of artwork from Jewish families by Adolf Hitler. Hitler

also sought out art he desired, most notably the van Eycks’ “Ghent Altarpiece” referenced in the book title.

“I couldn’t believe I didn’t know more about this part of the war,” says Fogle Boyd. “I thought the story would be best told as a historical novel. When I couldn’t find one, I decided to write it.”

Fogle Boyd says that while readers might not pick up a research text on World War II, the love story of Anke and Erik might be more approachable and might encourage readers to pick up a history book after finishing a novel.

### NEW DEAN ON THE SCENE



The Francis College of Engineering has a new dean this year. Joseph Hartman, an industrial and systems engineer by training, served as professor and chair of industrial and systems engineering at the University of Florida from 2007 through 2013. He served in a similar capacity at Lehigh University in Bethlehem, Penn.

A native of the Chicago area, Hartman received a B.S. in general engineering from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in industrial and systems engineering from Georgia Institute of Technology.

“When I interviewed this past spring, I could feel the excitement on campus—new buildings, growing educational offerings, vibrant research programs, eager students, entrepreneurial endeavors and Division I sports,” he says. “The excitement is invigorating.”

### PROF. MINKKINEN CELEBRATED AT CARNEGIE HALL

Prof. Arno Rafael Minkkinen has earned his share of acclaim: his work is exhibited in world-class venues including the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, the New York Museum of Modern Art, the Finnish Museum of Photography and the Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography. But for the Finnish-born photographer, being selected as the Lucie Foundation’s 2013 honoree for achievement in fine art was something special.

“It was one of the proudest moments of my artistic life,” says Minkkinen. “You don’t apply, you don’t even imagine—it just drops out of the sky. It’s not about money or fame, it’s just about the work. And knowing folks who got it, I would never imagine the shiny thing would one day come my way.”

The award was presented by Broadway producer Scott Landis (“Twelfth Night,” “Richard III,” “Nice Work if You Can Get It”) and renowned photographer Sally Mann in front of a full house at Carnegie Hall, including the Finnish ambassador, editors from Time and Aperture, and world-class photographers from around the globe.

“Arno is a man of enormous generosity and kindness and talent, so light-filled and lustrous that it parts your hair. He is surrounded by a bright nimbus of what Nabokov once called ‘aesthetic bliss,’ a state of being embracing curiosity, tenderness and ecstasy,” Mann told the crowd in her introduction.







LITTLE GIRLS AS SUICIDE BOMBERS?

Security Studies Profs Report on Trend

Over the past year, Mia Bloom and John Horgan, professors at UMass Lowell's new Center for Terrorism and Security Studies, have been spending time in Pakistan, conducting research on children's involvement in terrorism. They recently released some of their findings in an article on CNN.com.

"Disturbing reports are emerging from Afghanistan that a 10-year-old girl named Spozh-mai was pre-empted from carrying out a suicide bombing attack against a police station in Khan-shin," they wrote. "Though Taliban forces are already deploying female operatives in a limited capacity, it was the first report of a young girl who was groomed for martyrdom. It represents the latest development in a long history of terrorist organizations' use of children."

Bloom and Horgan report that in the large majority of cases they've researched, "the child recruits were genuinely unaware of what they were being asked to do—what such operations could entail. Those who were aware displayed serious hesitation and were often given drugs by their recruiters to help them to comply."

More than \$1 million in research grants has been awarded to the Center by the National Institute of Justice, news that was announced at the Center's opening event "New Security Challenges," which featured speakers such as then-Boston Police Commissioner Ed Davis; Nicholas Rasmussen, deputy director of the National Counterterrorism Center; Vincent Lisi, special agent in charge, FBI Boston Division; Andrea Cabral, Massachusetts secretary of public safety; and Roger Cressey '87, former National Security Council deputy for counterterrorism.

Visit [www.uml.edu/Research/CTSS](http://www.uml.edu/Research/CTSS) to read more about their research and that of the center's other faculty.

Candid Campus Chat: Menino Opens Up About His Career

Shortly before his 20-year career as Boston Mayor ended, Thomas Menino spoke on campus, providing a candid look back on his service.

"I just believe you should stand and say what's right, and that's how you get along in this business," said Menino, who spoke on stage with Brian Mooney, special assistant for strategic communications, as part of the University's Lunchtime Lecture Series.

Menino spoke about politicians' responsibility to their constituents, career highlights and future plans. One of the things he hopes to be remembered for, he said, is improving race relations in the city.

"Boston was a real racist city at one time," he said. "Everybody understands our diversity now and one of the strengths of our city is that diversity. We've been able to deal with some of those issues, to give opportunities

to a lot of the people in our city who didn't have opportunities in the past."

Menino's emphasis on improving the lives of others has struck people outside of his city's limits over the years, like Linda Hair-Sullivan, a Lowell State alum who attended the event.

"He cares about people," said Hair-Sullivan, who added that she often watched him on the nightly news and feels that he's been a mayor to more than Boston. "He really was everybody's mayor and offers many different groups support."

The Lunchtime Lectures are co-sponsored by the University's Center for Arts and Ideas and the Moses Greeley Parker Lectures, with support from Prof. Bill Mass of the University's Center for Industrial Competitiveness, the College of Health Sciences, Lowell General Hospital and Middlesex Community College. —JGG



Tom Menino discussed his 20-year career as Boston mayor with the campus community.



Sen. John F. Kennedy and wife, Jacqueline, are escorted into a campaign event by Richard Donahue '91 (H), campaign aide and Lowell resident, during a visit to Lowell in October 1958.



The Donahue family says goodbye to President John F. Kennedy. Remembers Nancy: "The President had said to Dick that he would like the family to come in so, of course, we did. We were waiting in the Cabinet Room—where the big table is—and the baby was on the floor crawling around and got under the table. When they said the President was ready—his appointment before us was with Gen. Maxwell Taylor—Stephen, the baby, wouldn't come out from under the table. So his older brother went under and pulled him out and, of course, he started crying. Dick picked him up and in we went. The President laughed and told Dick to give him to me because the baby didn't know his father. Not quite true, but they did work early to late every day!"

(Photo courtesy Poirier Collection, Center for Lowell History, UMass Lowell)

UMass Lowell Remembers JFK

In November, the University marked the 50th anniversary of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy with memorials and a musical performance, "Remembering JFK."

At UMass Lowell, the Kennedy family forged a bond that is deep and enduring. In September 1945, Joseph P. Kennedy, Sr. gave a scholarship to Lowell Textile Institute for graduate research in memory of his oldest son, Joseph, a U.S. Navy pilot killed in World War II. Eleven years later, then-Senator John F. Kennedy came to campus to receive an honorary Doctor of Science in recognition of his public service and leadership.

In the following years, the Kennedys returned to Lowell to campaign, stirring excitement that is captured in photos from the Poirier Collection at the University's Center for Lowell History.

Members of UMass Lowell's community paused to reflect on their memories of that Friday in November and to share their perspective on the impact of the Kennedy family legacy. Among them was Attorney Richard K. Donahue '91 (H), who was a special assistant to the President at the White House from 1960-1963.

"He sought me out, actually. It was 1951 and I had just been elected to the Lowell School Committee on stickers," Donahue says. "I had too much fun at a wedding, and got talked into running two days before the election. I woke up with a headache and a campaign."

But the successful 48-hour run elicited a fair amount of publicity—"it got worldwide attention," he jokes, "all the way to Boston"—and Kennedy, who was in Congress at the time but considering a Senate bid, asked to meet with Donahue.

"I ended up meeting him in the men's room after he gave a speech in the area," Donahue says. "He asked me if I thought he could win—and asked if I'd be interested in helping him. In those days, being from a struggling, Irish family, the capstone would be to have an Irish senator. So I said yes."

A 12-year relationship followed, with Donahue serving as a campaign operative in the Merrimack Valley during the Senate run and as a national staffer during the presidential campaign. After Kennedy won the latter, he asked Donahue to stay on and move to Washington, D.C., where the Lowellian served as a Congressional liaison.

"There was a lot of positive energy and many bright minds working to make things better," says Dick's wife, Nancy L. Donahue '13 (H), who had also worked on Kennedy's Senate campaign staff. "We have many happy memories of our time in Washington. Back then it wasn't the angry, divisive atmosphere it is today. Republicans and Democrats may have had different opinions and objectives but they talked and compromised and socialized."

But eventually Dick decided he'd had enough. "It was a stressful environment to work in—I was listening to complaints and demands all day long," he says. "and the President was a fair but tough person to work for. It was always 'Get it done, or get gone'."

He told the President he wanted to return to Lowell to take up his law practice once again. (Donahue would later serve as president and chief operating officer at Nike Inc. in Beaverton, Ore.)

"His resignation date was Nov. 15, 1963," recalls Nancy. "We had a lovely going away party on the Potomac on the President's boat and then just one week later he was shot. Of course, we flew back to Washington for the funeral. It was tragic for the whole world."



# Professor Jones Helps Artist Get His Groove Back

BY DAVID PERRY

“THE COVER OF THIS BOOK HAS BEEN ON THE BBC, NPR AND LOTS OF OTHER MEDIA OUTLETS, AND FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER, IT SAID, ‘PHOTOGRAPHED BY ROWLAND SCHERMAN.’ ”

The work of renowned photographer Rowland Scherman, above, will be published this spring in “Timeless,” co-edited by Prof. Michael E. Jones.

Michael E. Jones is seasoned at judging things. He is a pro, actually. He has done it while wielding a gavel in trial court and while serving on boards to resolve disputes surrounding the Olympic Games.

So when he saw the photographs of Rowland Scherman and heard his story, he judged this unique artist worthy of a book.

Bob Dylan’s wiry, mid-’60s mane in electric silhouette, iconic live shots from The Beatles’ first U.S. tour, seminal photos documenting the earliest days of the Peace Corps. JFK. RFK. When Crosby, Stills & Nash recorded their first album, he was in the studio.

He was there. Writers, poets, presidents, musicians, athletes, artists. And perhaps most iconic, Scherman captured a 12-year-old Edith Lee-Payne in 1963, during the March on Washington, whose weary gaze came to symbolize March participants.

Millions of people have seen Scherman’s work, and UMass Lowell legal studies professor Jones and his wife, Christine, decided to make it their mission to let them know the name of the photographer and resecure his copyright. Thanks to the book they edited, “Timeless: Photography of Rowland Scherman,” people are learning. The book, and Scherman’s stunning shots,



showed up often during media coverage of the 50th anniversary of the March on Washington last August.

“From the ’60s to the ’80s, he had this marvelous career,” Jones recently told a gathering on campus. “But when we met him not long ago, he was impoverished, living in Section 8 housing.”

The book, says Jones, will re-establish Scherman’s copyright over the work, in a world of complex and confusing digital rights. It is laced with the photographer’s recollections about the photos and will be available in bookstores this spring.

They are valuable photos. The Dylan shot, which ended up on the cover of the singer-songwriter’s first greatest hits album, earned Scherman a Grammy. But not much else. Jones says the record company paid him \$300 for a “one-time use.” One time, on millions of LP jackets.

Jones discussed the still young field of intellectual property, spoke of publicity rights and the world of publication and fair use.

But it all came down to this: “The cover of this book has been on the BBC, NPR and lots of other media outlets, and for the first time ever, it said, ‘photographed by Rowland Scherman,’” he says.

Scherman first made a name—albeit a different one—for himself as Billy Donahue, crooning the teen hit “Dream of Me”/“Oo Darling” on Coed records. But he discovered a love for photography and smitten with the art of the eye more than the voice.

He went on to shoot five covers for Life, as well as place freelance shots in a wide array of publications.

The eye became the voice.

Thanks to the Joneses, it is Scherman’s again. ■





## STUDENTS EXPLORE ELECTRONICS WITH 'LAB IN A BOX'

As they push through first-year classes in calculus, physics and engineering theory, freshmen engineering majors sometimes forget that the end result of those classes is the fun stuff: the ability and opportunity to design new products and processes.

But thanks to new Lab in a Box learning kits, freshmen in the Electrical and Computer Engineering program are getting hands-on training and design experience much sooner in their college careers.

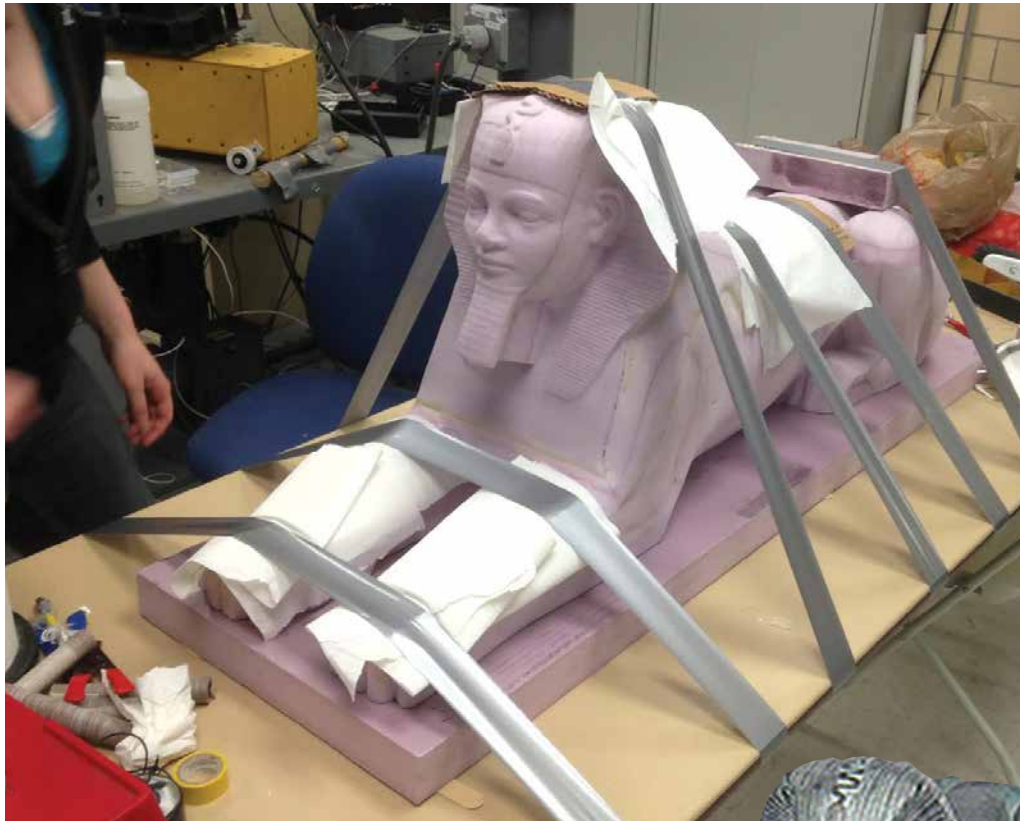
Erin Webster, a recent computer engineering graduate and teaching assistant, worked with Prof. Jay Weitzen and technology companies Analog Devices and Digilent to create the kits.

"We need to provide engineering students not only with math, physics and engineering theory, but also significant hands-on laboratory and open-ended design experiences so they are ready for high-technology jobs of the 21st century," says Webster, whose work has been featured in Forbes, Electronic Design and Planet Analog.

Lab in a Box consists of an Analog Discovery module that connects to a PC via USB and functions as an oscilloscope, waveform generator, logic analyzer, voltmeter and power supply. The kit also comes with a Parallax microprocessor board; basic electronic components such as resistors, capacitors and LEDs and the software to run everything.



Working with Prof. Jay Weitzen, computer engineering graduate student Erin Webster has developed "Lab in a Box," a complete, low-cost electronics workbench that is portable and flexible.



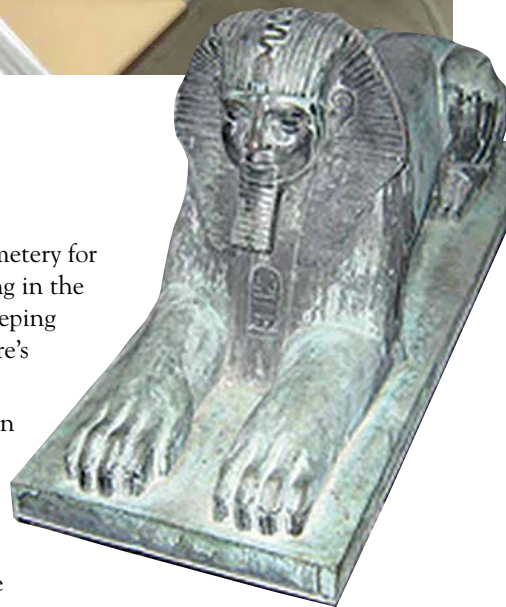
## Sphinx Meets 21st Century Technology

After protecting the receiving tomb at the Lowell Cemetery for a century, two 120-pound bronze sphinxes went missing in the 1970s. One was recovered and has been kept in safekeeping ever since. With the help of engineering students, there's hope the sphinxes will take their rightful places again.

The tomb was first used for the young son of Freeman Ballard Shedd, a cologne magnate, in 1890. It kept him and others who died in the winter safe until internments could resume in the spring. Mechanical engineering Asst. Prof. Christopher Hansen heard that the cemetery wanted to replace the missing statues with replicas that are easier to maintain and protect. He found five students eager to tackle the challenge as their senior capstone project.

The students digitally rebuilt the sphinx and milled a new one from foam. They also tested different composites to build a mold from the foam sculpture. While the sphinxes haven't made their return to the Lowell Cemetery yet, Hansen is confident that the project will be completed.

"The opportunity to work with cutting-edge products and materials such as 3D scanning and composites drew me to the project, but the rich history of Lowell and the opportunity to help restore a piece of city history was also appealing," says student Kyle Tweed.—JKG



Mechanical engineering capstone students are recreating a sphinx statue for the Lowell Cemetery with 3D scanning and composite research, above. The original sphinx is shown above.

## \$750K Grant Will Help Senior Citizens Breathe Easier

UMass Lowell has been awarded a \$750,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to reduce episodes of asthma among senior citizens living in Lowell public housing.

Studies show that asthma is under-diagnosed among senior citizens and that asthma-related morbidity and mortality among the elderly is increasing.

"The City of Lowell is an ideal area for our study since the prevalence of asthma among adults is 10.4 percent, higher than the state average of 8.1 percent," says David Turcotte, director of the Lowell Healthy Homes program, which is operated through UMass Lowell's Center for Community Research and Engagement. "Seniors in particular spend 90 percent of their time in their homes, breathing in dust mites, mold and toxic cleaning solutions that can trigger asthma attacks."

The study will measure the effectiveness of providing the elderly in Lowell public housing with interventions such as educational materials, mattress and pillow covers, green cleaning supplies, HEPA vacuum cleaners and pest control items to improve health and reduce medical costs.

UMass Lowell researchers are partnering with the Lowell Housing Authority and the Lowell Community Health Center.



## Study will Help Prevent Injuries from Radiation Exposure

A team of researchers from UMass Lowell and the Medical College of Wisconsin has been awarded two grants by the U.S. National Institutes of Health totaling nearly \$930,000 over a period of five years to develop ways to predict and mitigate injuries resulting from radiation exposure.

For one project, Biology Prof. Susan Brauhn and Physics Assoc. Prof. Mark Tries will collaborate with Assoc. Prof. Meetha Medhora in Wisconsin to test innovative "biomarkers" that can potentially detect radiation injuries to the lungs, weeks before symptoms become apparent. This will help doctors in reducing lung injury in victims of a radiological terrorist attack, a nuclear reactor accident or in patients receiving radiation therapy for lung and breast cancers.

The other project will study the use of the anti-hypertension drug lisinopril to mitigate radiation injuries to multiple organs, such as lungs and kidneys, before symptoms develop.

## SCIENCETO GO: GET YOUR HEAD OUT OF THE SAND!

Ostriches are the stars of the show in UMass Lowell's ScienceToGo.org, a multimedia, informal learning campaign designed to engage the 500,000 commuters who ride the MBTA Red and Orange lines daily.

ScienceToGo, funded by a \$2.2 million grant from the National Science Foundation, brings environmental awareness and science education into everyday life. Project partners include the Museum of Science, Hofstra University, UMass Boston, Goodman Research Group and the MBTA.

Through subway posters and placards, the project educates the public on the science of climate change while researching the efficacy of the approach. The campaign features a flock of ostriches, who, instead of keeping their heads in the sand on the important issue, share insights about climate change and how the public can get involved.

"Only 17 percent of the average American's life is spent inside a formal school setting and most adults learn informally," says Prof. David Lustick of the Graduate School of Education, who is leading the project. "If successful, the cost-effective model could be used on mass-transit systems across the country to address any socially relevant science topic."

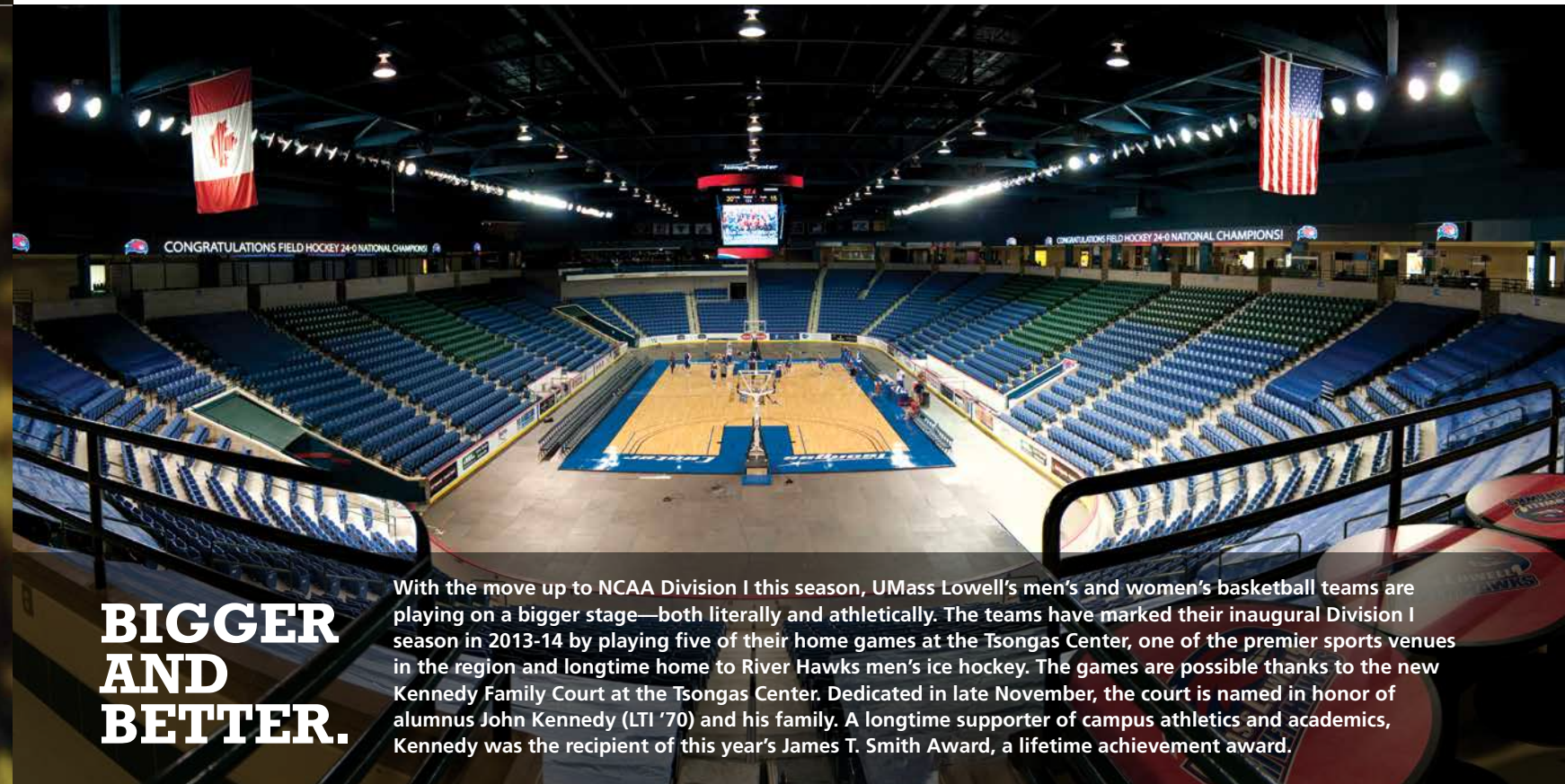


As part of the University's ScienceToGo campaign, signage throughout Boston educates the public about climate change.





Thanks to the River Hawks' escalation to Division I's America East Conference, the basketball team opened its season in the Crisler Center in Ann Arbor, Mich., where it took on the powerhouse Michigan Wolverines, a perennial Final Four contender. "I was really amped," says senior forward Kerry Weldon, shown here. "It was like, 'Wow, this is a dream come true, playing one of the top teams in the country.' [But] once the ball went up in the air, it was basketball—it was no different. There was a guy in another jersey you were just trying to go out and beat." The River Hawks held their own—the score was tied at halftime—but eventually lost 42-69.



## BIGGER AND BETTER.

With the move up to NCAA Division I this season, UMass Lowell's men's and women's basketball teams are playing on a bigger stage—both literally and athletically. The teams have marked their inaugural Division I season in 2013-14 by playing five of their home games at the Tsongas Center, one of the premier sports venues in the region and longtime home to River Hawks men's ice hockey. The games are possible thanks to the new Kennedy Family Court at the Tsongas Center. Dedicated in late November, the court is named in honor of alumnus John Kennedy (LTI '70) and his family. A longtime supporter of campus athletics and academics, Kennedy was the recipient of this year's James T. Smith Award, a lifetime achievement award.



## WHITE OUT!

On Nov. 23, the student section at the Tsongas Center was powered by Hood. The ice, meanwhile, was powered by "playoff-style hockey," says Head Coach Norm Bazin. One night after blanking the No. 6 Fighting Irish—then the top-ranked penalty killing unit in the country—with a final score of 1-0, the River Hawks secured a sweep with a 3-1 win. Goalie Connor Hellebuyck stopped 34 of 35 shots and UMass Lowell had three power-play goals.



## SOCCER WITHOUT BORDERS

Assistant Women's Soccer Coach Jamie Gillis '10 and soccer co-captain Margaret McSpirtt '14, spent a week in Nicaragua this January, volunteering with the organization Soccer without Borders. Their mission: use soccer to help underserved 10- to 14-year-old girls gain the confidence to grow and overcome obstacles.

"It was quite hot—over 90 degrees—and the field was mostly dirt as it is shared with a baseball field, but it was amazing to see the girls so excited to participate despite the heat," says McSpirtt. "All of the girls are so cute and just want piggy back rides and people to play with."

The pair—who were joined by several other current and former female collegiate players and coaches from all over the U.S.—also got a chance to play against the Nicaraguan women's national team.



When Andrew Byrne was diagnosed with Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia at 2 years old, everyone in his family rallied by his side. But what the Byrne family didn't know that day was that 27 burly members of the River Hawks men's hockey team also had his back.

May 2009 was just another jam-packed, bustling month for Jenn and Mark Byrne and their three kids, Carolyn, then 4, and her identical twin brothers, Andrew and Daniel, then 2.

Andrew had a low-grade fever and didn't seem himself for a couple of weeks, but when he woke looking jaundiced one morning, the family pediatrician suggested they go to the emergency room. When the nurse drew blood to check for problems, Andrew's arm instantly bloomed with bruises. Tests revealed he was severely anemic, his blood and platelet counts were low and his white blood cell count was high. This was no normal week.

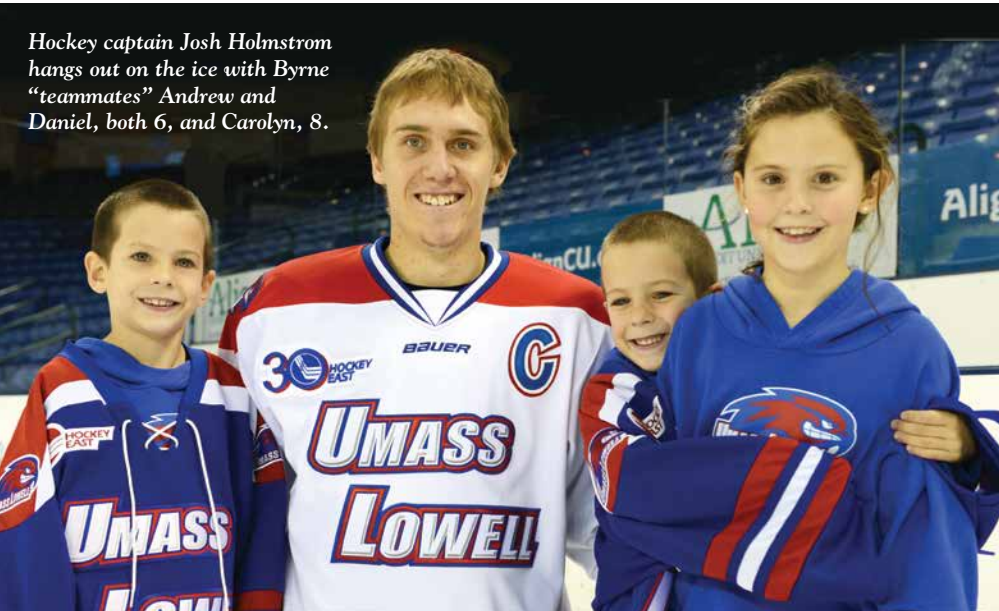
# Andrew Makes the Team

Andrew was dispatched immediately to Tufts Floating Hospital for Children, where he was diagnosed with Acute Lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL). ALL—a cancer of the blood cells that develops in the bone marrow where young, abnormal infection-fighting white blood cells, called lymphoblasts crowd out normal cells and spread into the bloodstream—is the most common and curable form of leukemia.

He began treatment immediately. Throughout the three-year ordeal, Andrew received chemotherapy, radiation, lumbar punctures, bone marrow biopsies, steroids, platelet and blood transfusions and other painful and invasive treatments to rid his body of the cancer.

Overnight, Jenn and Mark became medical experts as their family worked to heal Andrew and keep things together, staying as strong and positive as possible. It wasn't easy—a 2 a.m. fever meant an immediate trip to the hospital in Boston, and Carolyn and Daniel often woke up with mom (or dad) and Andrew gone. Jenn confesses that the whole family participated in "roid rage" caused by steroids, "getting irritated and frustrated and eating everything in sight" though Andrew was the only one being treated.

A highlight for all of the Byrnes was their trips to Maine's Camp Sunshine, which hosts sick kids and their families—a place where bald children, nervous siblings and frightened parents meet people in the same situation and relax for a few days.



Hockey captain Josh Holmstrom hangs out on the ice with Byrne "teammates" Andrew and Daniel, both 6, and Carolyn, 8.

On the way home from one of their Camp Sunshine excursions, Carolyn was happy, but confused.

"Everyone there was talking about cancer, but who in our family has cancer?" she asked.

"We never called it 'cancer,'" says Jenn. "That sounded way too scary—we just told the kids that Andrew's blood was sick."

A counselor at the camp told the family about Team IMPACT (inspire, motivate and play

**"WE NEVER CALLED IT 'CANCER,' THAT SOUNDED WAY TOO SCARY— WE JUST TOLD THE KIDS THAT ANDREW'S BLOOD WAS SICK."**

against challenges together) which pairs kids with chronic illnesses with sports teams who "adopt" them. Team IMPACT's Amy Resnick explains: "For many kids, getting involved with a team is a way to look down the road—not just to the next doctor's appointment, but to something fun."

Andrew was paired with the River Hawks men's hockey team—a "match made in heaven" for Mark, who grew up in Lowell with sister Emily, senior executive assistant to Chancellor Marty Meehan, and is a longtime UMass Lowell fan—and a beautiful friendship was born.

"Our work with the Byrne family is a very special opportunity for us—I think we get more out of it than Andrew," says captain Josh Holmstrom.

The team has taken its role seriously, making regular visits to the Byrnes' house for street hockey games and ping-pong battles, inviting them to join in team photos and locker room meetings. The kids go to every home game, know all of the players' numbers by heart, and feel that they, too, are River Hawks.

"It's nice to give back, and Andrew gives me perspective—there is a lot more to life than just hockey," says Holmstrom, who once surprised Andrew at his 8 a.m. Saturday flag football game the morning after a late night game of his own.

While Andrew has successfully completed his protocol, Jenn is clear that the ordeal isn't over.

"To be considered 'cured' Andrew must be five years cancer free," she says, noting that the milestone will happen this summer. Yes, they are relieved that the hospital stays and drug treatments are over, but remain nervous with every fever, each bruise.

As the Byrne family soldiers on, the River Hawks are staying right by its side, loyal friends of Andrew and his family for the long haul. ■

BY SHEILA EPPOLITO

2014 University Alumni Awards:

## Celebrating Alumni Achievement

Wednesday, April 16 • 5:30–7:30 p.m.  
UMass Lowell Inn & Conference Center  
50 Warren St., Lowell

\$75 per person  
\$35 for young alumni (2003-2013)  
A portion of your ticket will benefit student scholarships.

The University Alumni Awards honor a prominent alumnus/alumna in each school or college, along with one recent graduate. The awards are presented to alumni who have provided distinguished service to the University, their profession and their community.

This reception, dinner and award ceremony is one of our premier alumni recognition and achievement events. All are welcomed and encouraged to attend! For more information, visit <http://alumni.uml.edu/alumniawards>.



## HONORING FRIDAY, MAY 16, 2014 EXCELLENCE

*The 7th Annual Tribute to Commitment and Possibility*

### COMMENCEMENT EVE CELEBRATION 2014

The Seventh Annual Tribute to Commitment and Possibility

The evening will feature entertainment, dinner, cocktails and stunning décor. Celebrate the achievements of the academic year as we welcome our award recipients and distinguished guests.

Since its inception, this event has raised nearly \$3 million for student scholarships. Admission is \$125 per person

For details, visit [www.uml.edu/commencementeve](http://www.uml.edu/commencementeve).

Friday, May 16 • 5-8:30 p.m.

UMass Lowell Inn & Conference Center

*For more information, contact:*  
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[Kathleen\\_Sullivan@uml.edu](mailto:Kathleen_Sullivan@uml.edu)  
UMass Lowell Inn & Conference Center



## HAWKS GET HORNY!

Comprised mostly of UMass Lowell students and alumni, The Party Band—also known as the Riverhawk Party Band—was the brainchild of community music grad student Seth Bailin '06. Last March, Bailin, who plays tenor sax, invited a handful of members of the college's concert band (including Alex Allman, a baritone saxophonist) to join him after-hours for a jam session. Since then, the band has grown to nearly 25 members, who've played on Boston City Hall Plaza, at Somerville's HONK! festival, at the Lowell Folk Festival and in venues around the region.

The Party Band—whose self-described style is "New Orleans style jazz, boogie bounce, hot rhythm and swing"—performs both original music and covers. Heavy on brass instruments, the group eschews stages, preferring instead to roam through a crowd while playing. The group also regularly volunteers at local elementary schools.

"Our main goal is to bring the community together, which is done by performing for audiences of all ages," says Bailin, who also helped the band write and record its first album recently.

Other alumni band members include Kevin Bergquist '84, Zach Cooper '11, Mike Kaskiewicz '13, Savannah Marshall '13, Anthony Prestigiovanni '13, Joseph Prieto '13, Kyle Rees '13, Julie Rousseau '05, Zach Saunders '13 and Kevin Webb '12.

Find the Party Band on Facebook @ RiverhawkPartyBand, and Twitter @ PartyBaaand.



Credit: Anne Cook Photography

## UTeach Students Get Best of Both Worlds

Kreg Kaminski feels lucky.

He is learning about business while teaching in an internship he landed through the UTeach Program, a Graduate School of Education initiative, prepares students to become teachers while earning degrees in science, technology, engineering or mathematics.

The biology major is helping to teach an entrepreneurship course to Lowell High School students.

"By helping out with this course, I am getting an in-depth look at the processes behind both teaching and entrepreneurship," says Kaminski.

The new entrepreneurship course—M2D2 Partnership Experience—teaches Lowell High School honors students how to develop medical device products, from identifying market needs to designing prototypes and pitching ideas to industry experts.

M2D2—the Massachusetts Medical Device Development Center—worked with Lowell High School to launch the course intended to inspire students to consider science, technology, engineering and math professions.

Along with the high school students, Kaminski and John Romano, another UTeach intern, are learning about the medical device industry, entrepreneurship, communication and teamwork skills.

"This internship has been an amazing and rewarding experience for me," says Romano, a math major. "It is definitely giving me real-world experience on how to be a teacher and I'm also learning about the medical device industry and how to start a business." —KA



## TEXT IN THE CITY

As part of the Commonwealth Honors Program first-year seminar "Text in the City," freshman John Kilgo brought his classmates—led by Adjunct Prof. Maria Matarazzo—to tour the former St. Jean Baptiste Church, one of Lowell's most historic properties. Currently owned by TMI Property Management & Development—where Kilgo works part-time—the imposing stone cathedral was built in the Byzantine Romanesque Revival style between 1889 and 1896. TMI plans to restore the Merrimack Street building and convert it into a commercial venue.





In ‘Brain Sports,’ We’re All-America

UMass Lowell student athletes excel in a wide range of traditional sports. But there is an arena where students are tested in ingenuity and intellectual prowess—so-called “brain sports”—and UMass Lowell students are racking up impressive wins in national and regional competitions.

Here are just a few recent examples:

- A robotics team called the “Rover Hawks” beat seven other teams from nine universities from across the country to take home the top prize at this year’s RASC-AL Exploration Robo-Ops Competition sponsored by NASA.

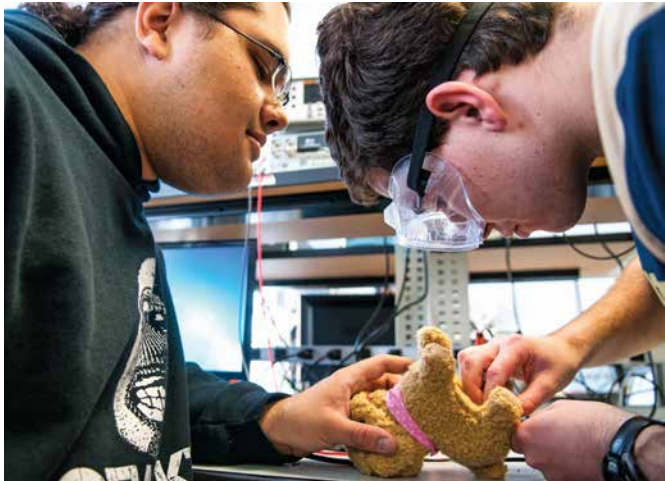
- UMass Lowell’s concrete canoe and steel bridge teams won first and third place, respectively, at this year’s regional competitions organized by the New England student chapter of the American Society of Civil Engineers.

- A group of undergraduate students in computer science and nutritional science beat 10 other teams of programmers to win the top honor at the first U.S. Department of Defense mobile app “hackathon,” organized by the U.S. Army Natick Soldier Research, Development and Engineering Center.

- “BioBot,” a low-cost, mobile germ-detecting robot built by a team of electrical engineering students, was selected, along with 30 entries from 18 institutions to win the “People’s Choice Award” category at this year’s Cornell Cup USA competition.

- A group of plastics engineering and chemistry students is among seven teams from six colleges and universities across the country that won the prestigious “P3”—People, Prosperity and the Planet—award from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The teams were recognized for their work in designing environmental solutions that will help improve quality of life, promote economic development and protect the environment.

- Four mechanical engineering seniors won first place for their innovative custom-fit knee brace in the 2013 Design for Direct Digital Manufacturing Competition, sponsored by the Society of Manufacturing Engineers.



YOU WON’T FEEL A THING, TEDDY

As part of a service-learning project, electrical and computer engineering students soldered large buttons onto toys for local organizations with special needs clients.

STUDENTS CONFRONT REAL-WORLD CHALLENGES IN HAITI



The water for drinking, cooking and bathing offered to Haitian residents from community wells is not always safe, says Prof. Robert Giles, whose testing found bacteria in the water there.

Giles, who chairs the Physics and Applied Physics Department, has worked with the poor of Haiti for over a decade. He established the UMass Lowell Haiti Development Studies Center (HDSC) in Les Cayes, about 200 miles southwest of Port-au-Prince, to engage faculty and students from Haiti and UMass Lowell to solve life-threatening conditions faced by citizens in the world’s poorest nations.

Two students in the University’s Commonwealth Honors program—Rachel Paquette and Jillian Giles—are collaborating with Giles and the Center staff to provide clean, safe water for Haitian residents.

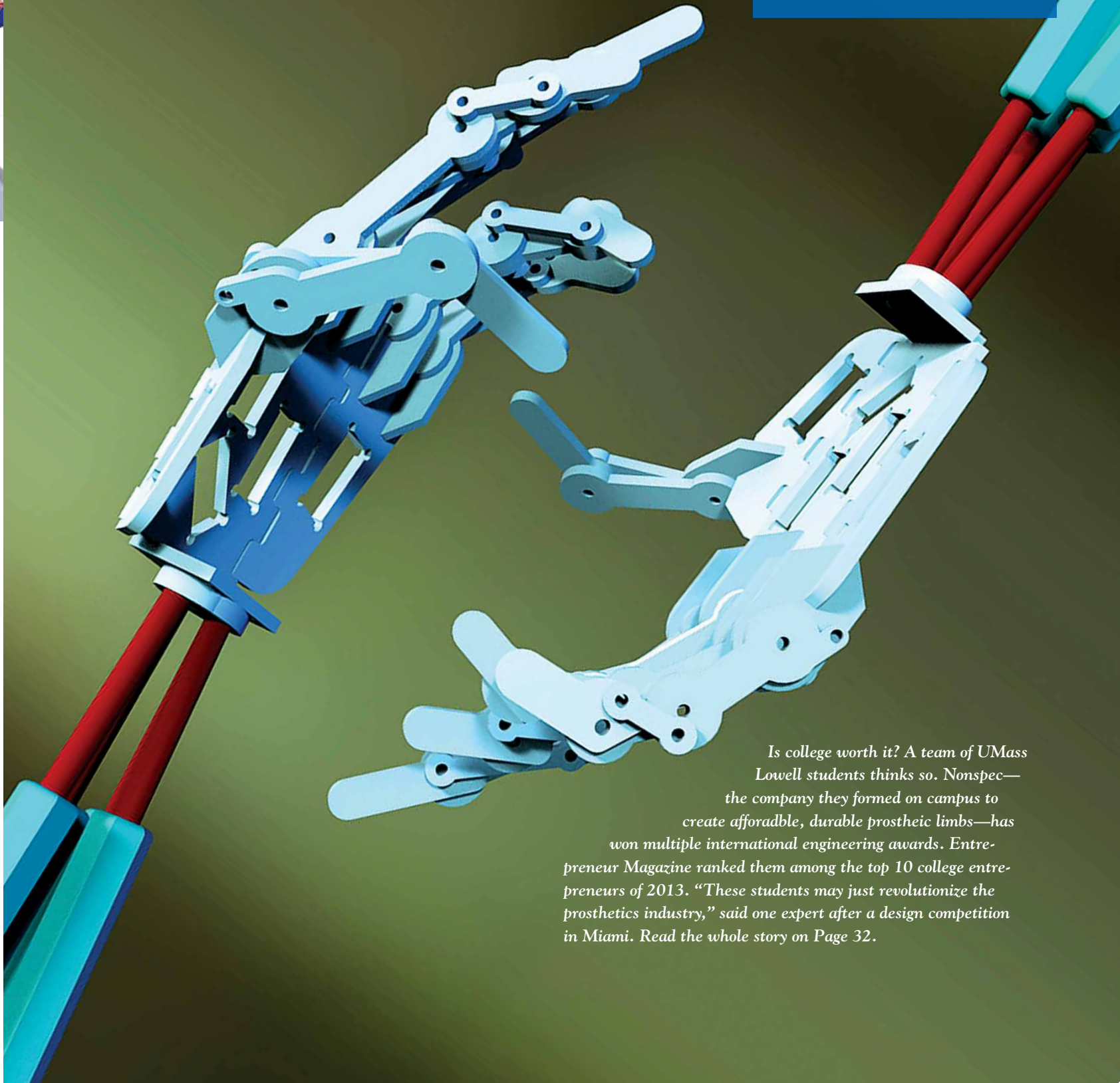
Paquette, a senior majoring in biology, is investigating established water-purification techniques with an eye to implementing them not only in the HDSC’s facility but also in the surrounding regions.

Jillian Giles, daughter of Prof. Giles, is a grad student in the physics Ph.D. program. She is developing a pilot study in Haiti to diagnose leptospirosis, a bacterial disease that affects humans and animals.

Features

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Is college worth it? A team of UMass Lowell students thinks so. Nonspec—the company they formed on campus to create affordable, durable prosthetic limbs—has won multiple international engineering awards. Entrepreneur Magazine ranked them among the top 10 college entrepreneurs of 2013. “These students may just revolutionize the prosthetics industry,” said one expert after a design competition in Miami. Read the whole story on Page 32.



# IS COLLEGE WORTH IT?

As more families question the value, UMass Lowell is shaping itself into a top-notch return on investment.

BY DAVID PERRY

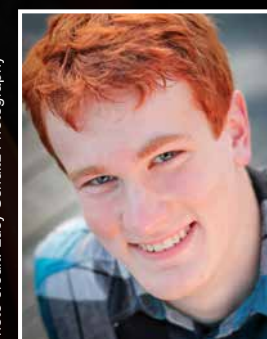


Photo credit: Lucy Schultz Photography

When it came to selecting a college, Kevin Dibble had a thing for letters. WPI. RIT. RPI. And there, last on his list, as a “safety” pick, were three more letters—UML, or UMass Lowell. A proven student who took an unconventional route to college, Kevin had his choice of the alphabet. He crunched more than numbers on his way to a decision. He chose UML. Dibble is exactly the sort of student who belongs in college, say experts.

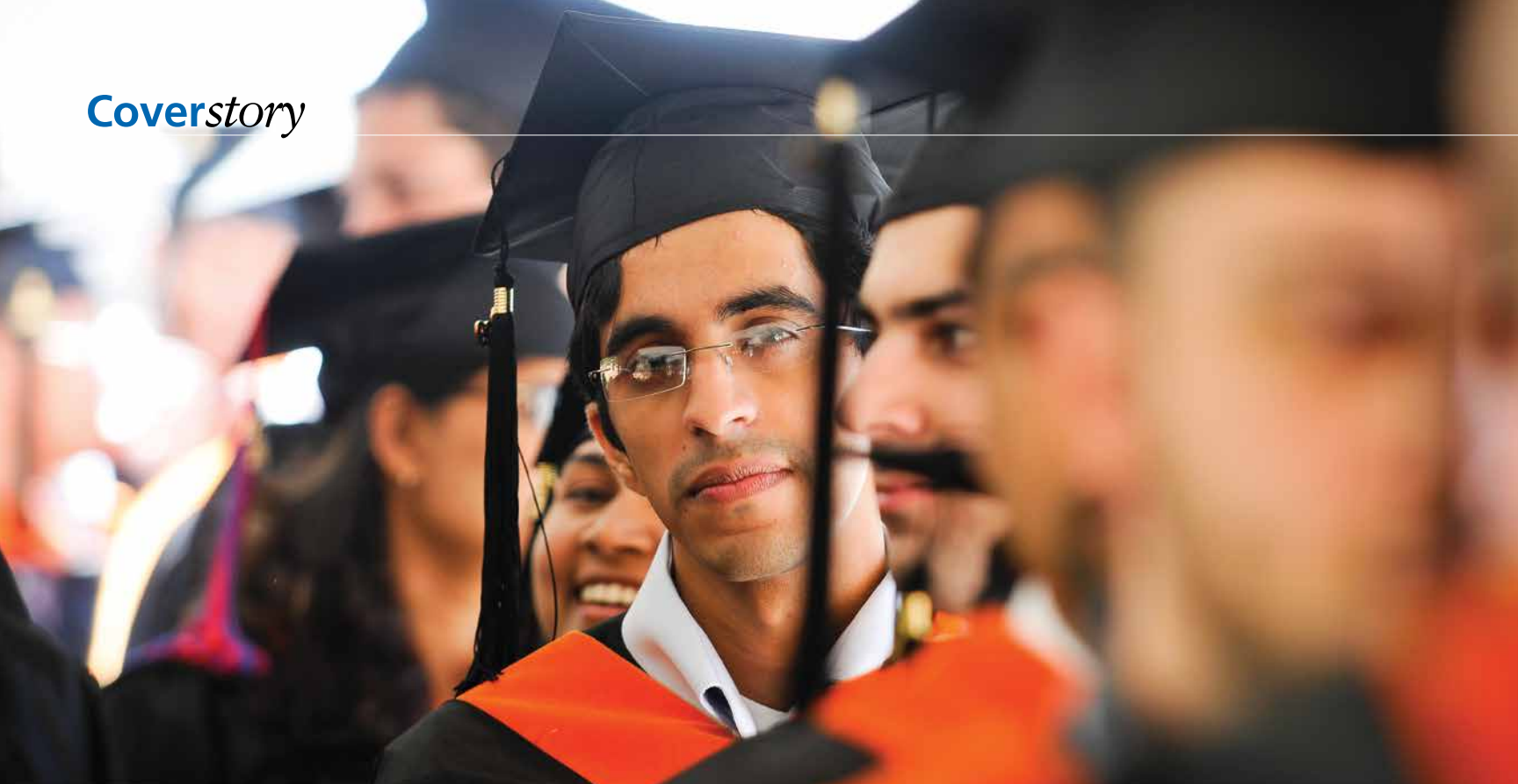
He knew he wanted higher education. He knew his direction. He looked at the whole picture, actively seeking the best fit.

Ask him if college is worth it and the Westford native smiles broadly.

“I feel I am exactly where I should be,” says the 18-year-old sophomore during a break in the Southwick cafeteria. “Every time I visited UMass Lowell I found something else that seemed exactly right for me.” His parents, Jacki and Doran Dibble—“escapees” of the corporate high-tech world as Doran puts it—agree.

*Continued*





**"BEST  
FOR VETS  
2014"**

— **MILITARY  
TIMES**



**NO. 13  
IN U.S. FOR  
INTELLECTUAL  
PROPERTY  
GENERATED  
THROUGH  
RESEARCH**

Increasingly, prospective college students and their parents are weighing the relative value of a college education. What is it worth—and is it worth emerging from the cocoon of college life swathed in deep debt, without job prospects?

A growing chorus of observers has weighed in on the matter, perhaps most notably former U.S. Secretary of Education and morning radio host William J. Bennett.

The value of a college education continues to fascinate and draw attention. In mid-December, the pollsters at Gallup announced they would team with Purdue University to more deeply measure the value of a college degree over the next five years. By the study's end, they hope to have asked 150,000 recent graduates about how their degree has affected not only their pay but the fullness and quality of their lives. So much for dry numbers.

**B**ennett's book "Is College Worth It?" argues that the answer is sometimes no. He argues that it depends, in part, upon the practicality of a student's major. And there are other factors to consider: Will the student emerge among the growing number of unemployed or underemployed college grads? And what sort of debt can his shoulders bear?

In short, it's ROI. Return on investment. It's cutting one's losses against the tide of debt and underemployment.

"Higher education is a cyclical business," says Richard Freeland, Massachusetts Commissioner of Higher Education. "Bad times in the economy are typically times when people take stock and seek out educational opportunities to re-skill or strengthen the skills they have. So it is not shocking that people are struggling to do it. But relative to the economy, people see UMass Lowell is a good value in

terms of employability as it represents strong science and technical sides."

Indeed, student loan debt recently reached the threshold of \$1 trillion in the U.S., according to the federal Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. Yet, according to an annual survey of college freshmen conducted by UCLA's Higher Education Research Institute, 88 percent of students attend college to have "a better chance for a good job."

But Bennett says only about 150 of 3,500 colleges and universities offer positive return on investment.

UMass Lowell is one of them. According to the 2013 rankings by Payscale.com, the University is 10th among the nation's public colleges for return on investment, and 50th among all colleges and universities.

Similarly, AffordableCollegesOnline named UMass Lowell 10th best public institution on its national Million Dollar Return on Investment list.

And it's a relative bargain. The College Board says the average cost of a four-year private college is \$39,518; many schools cost closer to \$50,000. Meanwhile, Massachusetts resident undergrads living on campus pay \$23,340 a year to attend UMass Lowell. Commuters pay \$12,097 annually.

"Of course," says Katie Bardaro, lead economist for Seattle-based Payscale.com, "return on investment is not the only consideration when you're applying to college, but it should be part of it. A lot of parents really value it."

Payscale.com began the annual survey in 2010, measuring student debt, tuition and their pay and work following graduation.

The schools that tend to do well have "a very strong STEM presence," says Bardaro. STEM is short for science,

technology, engineering or mathematics, all longtime core strengths of UMass Lowell. "Those are majors that are basically in demand in the workplace," she says.

It's not surprising, then, that enrollment has increased by 46 percent since 2007, to nearly 17,000 undergraduate and graduate students this school year.

**T**his year, UMass Lowell has been in the national spotlight more than ever, earning kudos from those who weigh institutional value. Perhaps most notably, in U.S. News & World Report's annual ranking of more than 1,500 universities, UMass Lowell jumped 12 spots to 158. In three years, the University has risen 25 spots, the second largest jump among all universities.

Forbes, meanwhile, named UMass Lowell 10th on its list of the nation's best-value colleges. And Business Insider called UMass Lowell the most underrated college in America.

More graduates than ever cross the threshold each spring. Athletics went Division I last summer. The University has greatly expanded its co-op program, research prospects and internship opportunities.

UMass Lowell was recently recognized as having the fastest-growing endowment in Massachusetts public higher education. In the past six years, it has grown by 75 percent, from \$37.7 million to \$66.1 million. Endowments are gifts to the University that are invested to earn a steady stream of revenue to fund scholarships, professorships, departmental chairs, fellowships and lectureships. This year, the University was able to award \$1.75 million—mostly for scholarships—to support deserving students and to help keep educational costs down. UMass Lowell is meeting 91 percent of students' requested financial need and has made it a top priority to continue growing endowments to ultimately met 100 percent of need.

And it's hard not to notice the University's mark on the landscape of Lowell, with eight new buildings opening in just a few years. Two new parking garages, the University Suites and Riverview Suites residence halls, the Health and Social Sciences Building and the in-progress University Crossing projects are reshaping the campus. The Tsongas Center and the Inn & Conference Center have been remade. The state-of-the-art Mark and Elisia Saab Emerging Technologies and Innovation Center now perches above the mighty Merrimack River. And the Pulichino Tong Business Building will break ground this spring. In all, the University has shepherded \$575 million in total building investment since 2008.

**T**he Dibbles noticed all of it.

"Every time we visited UMass Lowell, we left more impressed," says Doran. "There's so much available to take advantage of here."

The couple has always been deeply involved in the education of Kevin and his older sister, Kerry, 21 (a senior at Ohio State), as they home-schooled the children.

Other than pre-school, Kevin's first classroom experience came when he was 15 and enrolled in courses at Middlesex Community College.

"We asked each year if they wanted to go to public school and the answer was always no," says Doran, who fled the corporate computer world to provide home health care for people with Parkinson's and Alzheimer's diseases.

"We chose home schooling for a lot of reasons," he adds, "including that one goes as fast or slow as is needed. There's the luxury of time and pace, and an efficiency of learning, rather than following the pace of a full class."

"I learned wherever I was," says Kevin. "There was no separation between me and academics."

That Kevin pulled a 4.0 over two years at Middlesex offered more traditional proof of his smarts. He qualified for the UMass Lowell's Commonwealth Honors Program.

He got scholarship money, found Lowell's city campus wasn't as urban as he'd worried and, soon, UMass Lowell rose to the top of his list.

"I think it was last spring at an honors party where you could meet a lot of the kids and teachers," says Doran. "Everyone was just so great and took an interest."

"I loved it," says Kevin, who shadowed an honors student for a day.

"You know, there are horror stories," his father says. "The \$160,000 college bill to be a waiter. College is about broadening one's perspective, about maturing. But people need to earn a living wage to support a family."

When it came time for Kevin to make a decision, Doran was able to offer some perspective.

"I was impressed with UMass Lowell before—10 years ago I took a couple of classes," he recalls. "I knew it had a strong reputation in nursing and plastics. But I also had the feeling it was stagnant. Early on, when we started looking with Kevin, I noticed changes. And I was hearing about Marty Meehan. People were thinking in new ways."

*Continued*



**"THE COSTS OF  
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**“I WISH COLLEGE WAS MORE AFFORDABLE. BUT ARE COLLEGE GRADUATES BETTER OFF THAN PEOPLE WITHOUT DEGREES? NO QUESTION.”**



For Kevin, UMass Lowell boils down to three things. First, there’s the robotics program. Second, the social component. And finally, the financials.

Though UMass Lowell was the least expensive of his potential colleges, it impressed him the most.

“I always thought of college as this place, this thing where you go off to somewhere else. Far away,” he says. “But there are a lot of good professors here. The robotics program is amazing and I liked what I saw in every direction. The co-op program is interesting, to have a chance to work with people in a profession. It’s like having a chance to test-drive your future.”

“I think some people go to college for the wrong reasons,” he concludes. “Because their parents expect them to. They don’t have their priorities in order.”

“suppose part of what helped us in the rankings is the high percentage of our graduates who are in sciences, engineering and business—fields that are more in-demand now,” says Donald Pierson, vice provost for graduate education. “We talk a lot about UMass Lowell being a work-ready place, but it is a very real thing and it goes back a long way here. We prepare students in how to learn and adapt.”

Because college is a “cultural expectation,” as Pierson puts it, it can attract students who think they should be there but don’t know why.

“Some look at schools and choose without a specific career goal,” he says. “But careers in the sciences are very active right now, and there are a lot of job opportunities concentrated in the region”—to say nothing of the networking possibilities than often lead to work, he adds.

So what UMass Lowell offers is popular now, and practical.

“The landscape is changing, no doubt about it,” says Pierson. “The costs of a four-year education are so high, some students are quitting rather than amassing more debt,

and the debt some graduates are leaving school with is incredible. ... A college education should not amount to a lifelong sentence.”

“I love the community of learning that exists here,” says John Ting, vice provost for enrollment. “Our students come to learn, and along the way have fun—not the other way around.

“They don’t feel anything is “owed to them. They earn everything through their hard work, and this same attitude carries through after graduation, when employers tell us they flat-out prefer hiring our graduates over those from ‘elite’ schools,” says Ting.

“To me, it’s a no-brainer. Yes, college is worth it, absolutely,” says Commissioner Freeland. “Of course, I wish college was more affordable. But are college graduates better off than people without degrees? No question.”

According to a Pew Research Center Report from 2011, the economic differences are sharp. Based on a 40-year work life, high school grads will earn \$770,000. An average college graduate hauls in \$1.42 million.

“Listen,” says Freeland. “I am very much in the fan club of the work Chancellor Meehan is doing at UMass Lowell. It truly is an institution on the rise. He is leveraging the institution’s intrinsic strengths in a really good way. SAT scores and applications are up. And I know from visiting that the energy level on campus is palpable.

“All of the building, the involvement with downtown, it’s obvious something is going on. Students react to that, and faculty react to that. There’s been an improvement on a number of levels. Look at the statistics. The graduation rates, the application rates, up in real, substantive ways.

“Lowell is a happening place. You have to credit the Chancellor with an awful lot of that. The college now has a pizzazz, an energy, a visibility. It is infectious.” ■





From Concept to Reality, to the Wider World:  
RIDING THE WAVE OF AN IDEA

BY GEOFFREY DOUGLAS

There were six of them, mostly engineering students. They shared some labs, often did homework together. At some point, about midway through their sophomore year, one of them, Jonathan de Alderete, a mechanical engineering student, came up with an idea for a group project: a cheap, durable, expandable prosthetic limb for amputee children. They talked it back and forth for a while, then built a crude model:

“Somebody said it looked kind of like a sausage taped to a CD,” de Alderete remembers today. “It was definitely pretty grotesque.”

Nothing happened for a while. Then, early last winter, the group entered their project in the University’s first annual DifferenceMaker Challenge. A creation of Executive Vice Chancellor Jacqueline Moloney and Associate Vice Chancellor Steven Tello, the program offers cash prizes to student teams that come up with the most innovative solutions to real-world problems. By the time the entries closed, there would be 40 teams competing, from 25 academic departments.

Several months later, in late April, at the Saab Emerging Technologies and Innovation Center in front of a panel of alumni judges and an audience of 100, the 10 finalists, including de Alderete’s team—which at the time was calling itself Developing Nation Prosthetics—had three minutes each to present their concepts. De Alderete’s group was voted the best and awarded the top prize of \$5,000.

That should have been the end of it—and indeed, for a while, there was a lull. But then, last September during the first week of classes, an email arrived in de Alderete’s inbox: His team had been named as a finalist in the International Association of Plastics Distribution’s yearly design competition; could they make it to Miami in two weeks to make their presentation? They did, were again voted best and received the first-place award of \$1,000. (The second place winner was a design team from Harvard.)

And it wasn’t over yet. In November, Moo.com, the international online designer of business cards, awarded the group the grand prize of \$11,000 in its yearly design competition—followed days later by a \$5,000 grant from the National Collegiate Inventors and Innovators Alliance. Entrepreneur Magazine, meanwhile, had voted them among the top 10 “College Entrepreneurs of 2014.”

“We’re living a crazy life right now,” says Erin Keaney, another member of the group, which has since changed its name to Nonspec, in a nod to



de Alderete’s view that every component of their creation serve more than one function. “I never saw myself as an entrepreneur, but that’s what it’s turning into. A lot of this feels pretty alien.”

Alien or not, it’s no stretch to see what all the fuss is about. According to a 2006 study, a traditional prosthetic limb for a child in a developing country can cost as much as \$1,900, and will need to be replaced multiple times—way beyond

the range of anything a typical rural family could afford. Nonspec aims to bring its product to market at roughly \$20 per unit; and because of its telescope design, says de Alderete: “Children will need to change their prosthetics fewer times, allowing them to develop their muscles regularly, and enjoy a more normal, active life.”

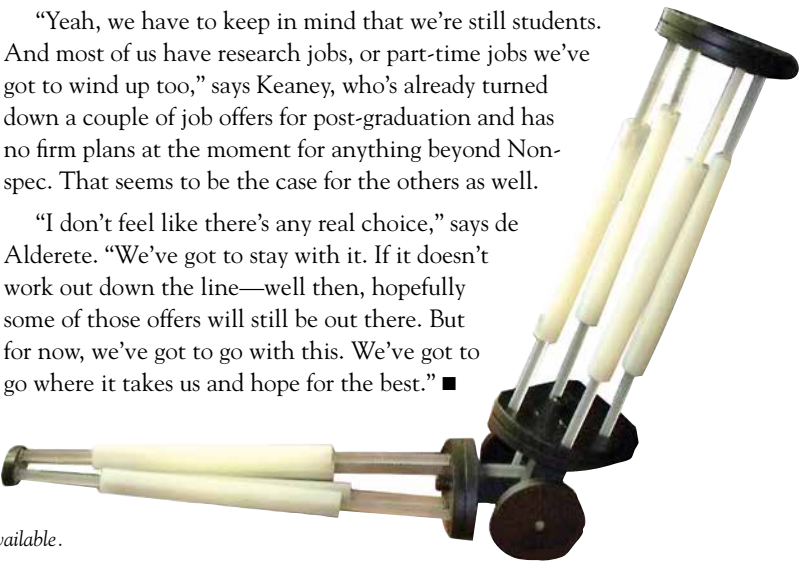
“These students may just revolutionize the prosthetics industry by using medical-grade plastics to take the place of heavier, more expensive metal components,” reads one press account of the Miami plastics award.

The plan from here, say the group’s members (the others are engineering students Katherine Cain and Olivia Keane, MBA student Tucker Holladay and co-op student Brendan Donoghue), is to test their device as early as this spring—possibly with a veterans’ group—then proceed to clinical trials in a developing country; at press time, Haiti and Rwanda were the leading prospects. Longer term, the goal is to distribute in the U.S. within 18 months, with overseas distribution to follow.

Meanwhile, though, for most of them, there is a spring semester to think about, followed by finals, graduation, employment prospects—then all the promises and perils of Life After College.

“Yeah, we have to keep in mind that we’re still students. And most of us have research jobs, or part-time jobs we’ve got to wind up too,” says Keaney, who’s already turned down a couple of job offers for post-graduation and has no firm plans at the moment for anything beyond Nonspec. That seems to be the case for the others as well.

“I don’t feel like there’s any real choice,” says de Alderete. “We’ve got to stay with it. If it doesn’t work out down the line—well then, hopefully some of those offers will still be out there. But for now, we’ve got to go with this. We’ve got to go where it takes us and hope for the best.” ■



Nonspec’s exanpable prosthetic limb will cost about \$20—as opposed to the nearly \$2,000 ones currently available.

WHY IS UMASS LOWELL A GOOD CHOICE?

We went straight to the source—and asked the people in the thick of it. Here’s what our students have to say about why the University is “worth it”:



“People here are just generally supportive of students starting big projects and events and helping us with them. They just say ‘Go!’ ... While I worked at Google and Microsoft in summer 2013, a kid down the

hall busked in Cambridge making good money and played at the Hard Rock Café with other honors students.”

—ANDREW AMBROSINO, an honors computer sciences student who chose UMass Lowell because of the “start-up mentality”



“My internship at the Nano/Green lab gave me a wonderfully hands-on introduction to chemical engineering that was vastly different from the equally important

one I received through courses and lectures. The experience cemented my decision to become a chemical engineer.”

—NEHA MANOHAR, a chemical engineering student who has published four research papers and presented findings to 13,000 people at the national meeting for the American Chemical Society



“I love it [at UMass Lowell]. There are amazing opportunities. Why would I want to go anywhere else?”

—VLADIMIR SALDANA, a finance and management student whose opportunities included

a semester studying at the University of Barcelona and the chance to ask questions on stage during a nationally televised U.S. Senate debate held at the Tsongas Center



“The honors program provides so many opportunities for students to develop both knowledge and leadership qualities. My peers are smart and push me harder. We work together in collaboration, not competitively.”

—RUCHIKA SHAH, a nursing student who has already gotten experience via two clinical internships at Boston Children’s Hospital and Lowell General Hospital



“I was looking for the best audio engineering program in the world. I am so grateful for what I have been given here. It is very demanding, but very fun. You become powerful. You feel like you are achieving things, that you are becoming ready for the world.”

—LEANDRO QUEZADA, sound recording technology student who says he chose to leave his native Ecuador to attend UMass Lowell after an exhaustive global search



“The minute I visited UMass Lowell and talked to the professors, I knew this was the program for me. ... I feel like I’ve come full circle. I learned in class about the politics of health care, how the federal system works

and how programs get funded. I gained experience working for a federal health agency and now I’m implementing health programs in my local community.”

—ANDREA EVANS ‘12, a community health and sustainability student who interned at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office on Women’s Health, and is now an education program coordinator at Massachusetts General Hospital



“The education I’ve received at UMass Lowell is priceless. There are so many career options that medical laboratory scientists can choose from after graduation. [The clinical internship] is like a ‘try-out’ for a sports team. Each

student has five weeks to demonstrate his or her skills in front of potential employers. You end up getting so many career offers that you have to turn some down.”

—AARON STELLA, biomedical engineering and biotechnology Ph.D. student who also works at Mayo Medical Laboratories New England



“In choosing UMass Lowell, I did not make the decision lightly. I’ll be graduating with no debt and paid for most of school myself.”

—MIKHAILA SCHAEFFER, an

economics major who interned at an engineering company and also worked on a political science research project through the Emerging Scholars program



“The experience expanded [my sense of] the boundaries of the traditional four walls of a classroom, allowing me access to incredible professors, and diverse ideas from students all over the world. ...

UMass Lowell has pioneered innovative learning. It is pursuing a vision to transform teaching into a true 21st century learning experience.”

—JESSICA HUIZENGA ‘05, ‘12, Graduate School of Education student who earned master’s and doctoral degrees here, the former through the online program; she is now an assistant superintendent at Cambridge Public Schools



# Engineering the Perfect Cookie

**ALUMNI CHRIS AND PAULA WHITE** Use Undergrad Lessons in Innovation to Build Multimillion-dollar Business

BY SHEILA EPPOLITO



*Paula White '91 and son, Mickey, posed for marketing shots in the 600 lb Gorilla early days.*



**T**hey say it all started in the car, on the way to the Cape.

Chris '91 and Paula (Moriarty) '91 White were chatting, as they often did, about ideas for creating their own business. They'd considered many possibilities—perhaps they should buy a franchise? Create a Disney-advice show for the Travel Channel? Sell Chris' statistical analysis program for pitchers to Major League Baseball?—but none stuck.

Then, somewhere along Route 3, Paula said, "Hey, what about that cookie dough idea you mentioned? I mean how hard can it be? It's just cookie dough."

## AND A 600 POUND GORILLA WAS BORN

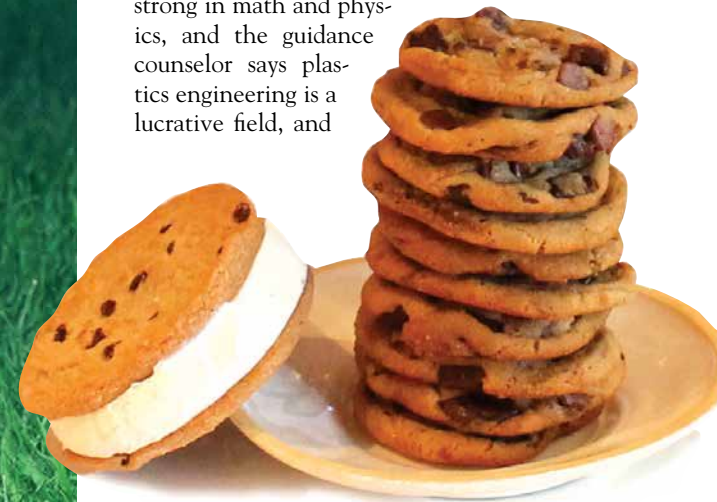
The story of 600 lb. Gorilla, Inc. really began much earlier, as far back as 1987, in a fourth-floor dorm room in Bourgeois Hall, where Chris made an astute, entrepreneurial observation. Long before there was a variety of dining choices on East Campus, Friday and Saturday nights featured hungry students returning at 1 a.m. with no food options. White and his roommate (Gary Cronin '88) responded by buying cold cuts and rolls, slapping together sandwiches and selling them—at a significant profit. Operation cold cut was followed by an equally successful underground T-shirt trunk sale, in which a \$1,000 investment in Bobby McFerrin-inspired "Don't Worry, Be Happy" T-shirts with bootleg ULowell logos sold out immediately.

This entrepreneurial spirit might suggest the Whites were business majors—maybe marketing. But the founders of what has become a multimillion dollar premium, all-natural cookie dough and ice cream sandwich company hold degrees in engineering: Paula in plastics, Chris in civil.

## THE LONG AND WINDY ROAD

Paula Moriarty grew up in New Bedford.

"I was the first in my family to go to college, so when the time came to choose a major, it was like, 'Well, I'm strong in math and physics, and the guidance counselor says plastics engineering is a lucrative field, and



ULowell has a program, so I guess I'll do that," she says.

Chris, from Sutton, had an equally roundabout entrée to engineering.

"Things were different then—parents weren't involved in every step of their kids' academics the way we are now," he says. "Around April of my senior year, when my dad casually asked about college plans, I told him I was going to W.P.I."

His dad's reaction?

"No you're not—we can't afford that. Check out ULowell or join the ROTC."

## LOVE IN LOWELL

So it happened that Chris and Paula found love in the Merrimack Valley.

"We'd seen each other around campus and at local watering holes for a couple of years," says Chris. "The first real 'encounter' was at a Halloween party in 1989 at the Pawtucketville Social Club that I threw with my roommates [Jamie Jackson '91 and Sean Roche '91] to try and make money by charging admission. I was a conehead and Paula was a clown—I only charged her half."

They succeeded in their respective majors, and enjoyed the life of the undergrad. Paula was captain of the ski team; Chris played intramural sports and was involved in the concrete canoe race.

"Our boat didn't sink, but it was too heavy to paddle—Tom Faber ['91] and I managed a third-place finish through sheer determination," he says.

Then, just before graduation, Paula was offered a job with a medical devices company in California, and knew she wouldn't go unless Chris went, too.

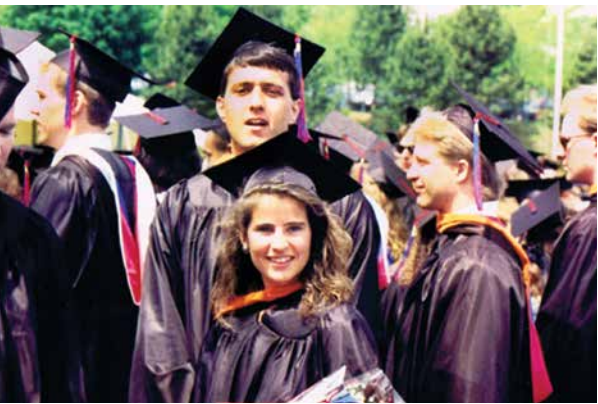
The day after commencement, they flew across the country together, vowing to stay for five years. Both succeeded in engineering positions—Chris was quickly hired by the California Department of Transportation—but the long hours, lousy commutes and 4 percent annual raises weren't doing it for them. They'd sit in their apartment at night, cutting refrigerated cookie dough from a plastic log, cooking it in their toaster oven and brainstorming ways to become their own bosses.

"The first day I went to work in California, we both knew we didn't want to be engineers for the rest of our lives," says Paula.

Paula and Chris married and, true to their plans, the couple returned to Massachusetts in five years, with Paula accepting a position with Boston Scientific and, later, Chris with the Big Dig. Then came their first child, Mickey, and the challenges of two full-time positions and long commutes worsened. It was time to take the plunge.

*Continued*

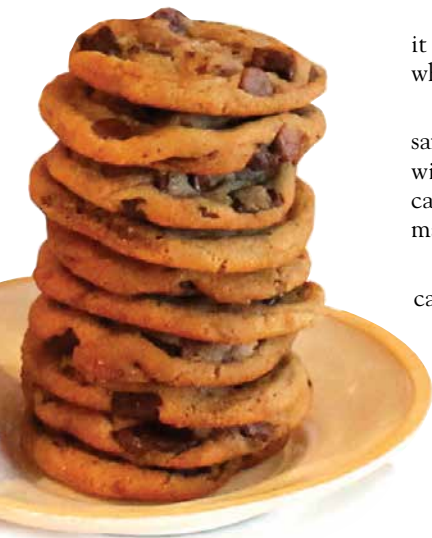




Chris and Paula (Moriarty) White graduated from the University of Lowell in 1991.

“ULOWELL FOSTERED AN ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT IN US.”

—Chris White '91, co-founder of 600 lb. Gorilla



ROLLING IN DOUGH

Following their Cape Cod car ride and hours of discussion, Paula and Chris agreed to pursue a company devoted to creating all-natural premium cookie dough. They split the duties—Chris began testing recipes, investigating sources for chocolate, vanilla extract and the rest of the ingredients, while Paula immersed herself into the marketing and sales components of the business—all while balancing engineering jobs and a newborn.

Paula worked for Boston Scientific at home part-time, spending Mickey’s two-hour naptime getting smart about retail business, grocery store shelving policies, marketing and advertising. It wasn’t easy.

“I can’t tell you how many calls I made while simultaneously changing a diaper,” she says.

Then Boston Scientific forced her professional hand: either she work full-time, or they would have to let her go.

She went.

A MATTER OF DEGREES

As Paula and Chris dove into cookie-making, they were surprised at how much they relied on their engineering educations and experience.

“The math, logic, planning and analytical skills we learned as engineers were invaluable,” says Paula, who also cites help from a required ULowell writing course when it came time to write a business plan.

While Chris simultaneously juggled his Big Dig job, Paula dove right in to the cookie business, seeking help from SCORE, a non-profit organization that provides support to small businesses trying to get off the ground. Eventually, she and Chris took out a Small Business Administration loan and hired a marketing consultant to help them with branding, logos and promotion.

“We named our company the 600-pound gorilla because it was memorable, and because it was the exact opposite of what we really were,” says Chris.

Part of the SBA loan was used to create a safari set, complete with a 10 x 10 pop-up tent with Tahitian thatch roofing, Mexican rain cape roof and a split Bamboo-branch skirt, and matching costumes.

At the Boston Food Festival, the kitsch caught on, and the smell of fresh-baked cookies drew lines of fans.

“We handed out cards and asked people how they felt about our product, and where they shopped,” says Paula.

Armed with collected data on shoppers’ preferences, the Whites began cold calling buy-

ers from major New England grocery stores, hoping to get some face time.

In one instance, Paula was afraid to make the call, so Chris did, during a break from his Big Dig job.

“Who’s calling?” asked the buyer’s receptionist.

“Chris White from 600 lb. Gorilla,” answered Chris.

After a chuckle—“I think she thought I was one of the buyer’s buddies messing around”—Chris was patched through. He held his own through the conversation, and a meeting was scheduled.

Paula made them both dress up in their safari garb for the meeting. But after arriving at the corporate office, they felt a bit foolish, sitting in the lobby sporting full safari attire, including boots, mid-calf brown wool socks, khaki cargo shorts and matching shirts with the gorilla logo, all topped off with original Tilley Endurable hats.

“The buyer was an older guy who looked like he’d seen it all—I was sure we blew it,” says Chris.

The buyer gave them a chance, offering to carry their cookie dough in 225 area stores, and, in an added bonus, waived standard slotting fees that could easily have reached \$50,000.

THEY WERE ON THEIR WAY

They incorporated in 1999, and production began in a modified technology incubator a few doors down from their home in Wrentham.

Over the next few years, Chris was laid off from the Big Dig, and turned all his energy to their company. The Whites welcomed two more children, Rylee and Raegan, making the challenges of building a company with no steady income that much more difficult.

While the Whites’ commitment to their cookie venture never wavered, their finances took a whacking.

“We were always good savers,” Paula says.

“But one year, at tax time, our accountant looked at our W-2—which reported \$17,000 in income—and asked where the rest of the income was.”



Chris and Paula White and their children Mickey, Rylee and Raegan.

Credit: Emily Antonelli Photography



Chris and Paula used no-interest credit cards to finance their operation, carefully moving balances to new cards when the no-interest periods were up.

Their product was selling well in stores, but the good times were not rolling.

WHOLESALE CHANGES

They finally got another break, this time from a buyer at BJ’s Wholesale Club, who agreed to sell their product and allow in-store sampling.

“For 26 consecutive four-day weekends, my mom took our three kids, and Chris and I drove to club stores all over the East Coast to do sampling,” says Paula.

They often took off on Thursday, drove 12 hours and set up their safari road show booth before crashing for the night. Then, they’d wake up and get to the store before opening, sample all day, take the set down, pack it up and move to another store. The Whites—and Paula’s mom—were exhausted.

Because of her affiliation with the Center for Women and Enterprise in Boston, Paula was invited to the Bentonville, Ark., headquarters of Wal-Mart, with an opportunity to meet with a buyer. The Whites could not afford the trip, but they couldn’t let the opportunity pass, either. They scraped the money together, and Paula flew to Arkansas.

“There were a bunch of meetings, and a corporate rally kind of love-fest thing where we all had to jump up and yell ‘Wal-Mart! Wal-Mart! Wal-Mart!’,” says Paula.

She did her part, jumped and cheered, bidding her time until the meeting. When she went to the appointment, though, the receptionist told her he’d left for the day.

“I freaked out, I mean, I flew all the way down there, we didn’t have the money, and now I was going to have to go

Credit: Emily Antonelli Photography

home and tell Chris that I didn’t get the meeting—it was horrible,” she says.

PATIENCE PAYS OFF

Fast forward to 2014, and things have improved for the Whites and their gorilla.

They’ve weathered economic downturns, expanded their business (at BJ’s request, they created an all-natural ice cream sandwich) and moved into their dream home near the water on the south shore.

Their products are now produced in New Jersey and Ohio and, years after the fateful Bentonville trip, they’ll soon be sold in Wal-Mart stores nationwide.

“The University fostered an entrepreneurial spirit in us,” says Chris. “There were assignments and lessons, including a drawing/design class that asked students to not only invent a child’s high chair that would attach to a table, but also to discuss the marketing advantages of the design to sell the concept to the class: I loved that.”

One former professor stands out as a champion of entrepreneurial spirit.

“Dr. Petrovek was assistant dean of engineering and an entrepreneur,” says Chris. “He taught a communications class that required us to market ourselves—he felt engineering skills were necessary, but being able to sell yourself was also vital.”

Petrovek, who now teaches at UMass Dartmouth, was an early investor in the Whites’ company, helping the brainchild of students who live his lessons.

The Whites, meanwhile, say the big risk was worth it. “We wouldn’t change a thing,” says Chris. ■

600 lb Gorilla Cookie Dough is in the freezer section in Stop & Shop, Roche Bros., Peapod.com, Giant Food Stores, Martin’s Food Stores and Wal-Mart Super Centers. The company’s ice cream sandwiches can be found at BJ Wholesale Clubs and (as of March) Wal-Mart Super Centers.



*This is a story about two men who have very little in common. Or so it would seem.*

*James Costos and Alan Solomont were born nearly a generation apart. One was a political science major before turning to a career in fashion, then TV. The other trained as a nurse and went on to make his mark in eldercare nursing homes. One was raised the son of Greek immigrants; the other hails from Russian Jews. One was a political activist, the other emphatically not.*

*But there is this: One just succeeded the other as U.S. ambassador to Spain. And both men are UMass Lowell alumni.*

# The Ambassadors

## Two Men, Two Paths, Crossing in Madrid

BY GEOFFREY DOUGLAS



"Today is a day I would never have dreamed about," said James Costos '85 (above, right), the younger of the two, to an audience in Washington, D.C., on the day of his swearing-in last summer. His incredulity isn't hard to grasp. It's an improbable road between a childhood as the son of middle-class Greek-Americans in Lowell and the U.S. Embassy in Madrid; between membership on the board of the U.S. Humane Society and the ambassadorship of a country whose signature sport involves the killing of bulls; between a life lived as an openly gay man and the historically machismo ethic (for all its more recent tolerance) of a country such as Spain.

But Costos sees no contradictions—or, rather, admits none. Of the unlikelihood of his career path, he explains simply: "My passion for service comes from my parents, who instilled in us the values of hard work, self-reliance and service, exemplified by my father's tenure as a U.S. Marine." Of the seeming dichotomy between his commitment to animal welfare and Spain's passion for the bullring, he is classically ambassadorial: "I respect Spanish culture and its traditions, one of which is the corrida. And who am I to give my opinion?" And finally, on the issue of his gayness, as expressed to a Spanish newspaper last fall: "I broadly support human rights for straight, gay and women's issues. But an activist? No. I've never held a sign and rallied. I just happen to be gay."

The older man, Alan Solomont '77, '94 (above, left) was an activist from the start. The son of a Russian-Jewish immigrant father who began his working life at 17 in the sweater mills of Lowell—then went on to own several businesses, including a night club, The Blue Room, on Merrimack Street—Solomont came of age at a time, the 1960s and early '70s, when the movement for social justice was cresting. As a \$2.32-an-hour worker in a local nursing home, he led the fight to improve conditions there—and was fired for his efforts. He launched an alternative monthly newspaper, The Communicator, that aired the grievances of the poor and working class. He was among the region's earliest protestors—along with John Kerry, who eventually became a friend—against the war in Vietnam.

By the mid-'70s, his work in the nursing home had instilled what would be a lifelong passion: Already with a degree from Tufts, he returned to school, this time to ULowell, leaving in 1977 with a B.S. in nursing.

"I was always an activist. I came to it naturally, it was part of the message I got from my father—about what it means to serve something bigger than yourself," says Solomont, who, with wife Susan Lewis, has two daughters.

One of those "bigger somethings" would be eldercare. After several years as a nursing-home director, he widened his field of vision with the launching, in 1984, of a multi-layered management and consulting organization, the A.D.S. Group, which developed New England's premier network of services for the elderly. Its success, he says today, was "the platform I needed—for public service, philanthropy, all the ways I've found [since then] to try to make a difference in the world."

Those ways have been legion. At least since the sale of A.D.S. in 1996, Solomont's presence has been felt across an ever-widening spectrum: the boards of hospitals, corporations, non-profits and universities—including the chairmanship of ULowell during the time of its merger with UMass—treasurer of the Massachusetts Democratic Party, national finance chair of the Democratic National Committee, lecturer, philanthropist, ambassador to Spain—the last an honor, he says, that "would have made my father so incredibly proud." And finally, beginning in January, dean of Tufts University's Jonathan M. Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service, whose mission, he says, is, "to see to it that every student is educated to be an active citizen."

For James Costos, who entered the working world 15 years later than his predecessor at the embassy, the route there was as different as the times. Not long after earning his ULowell degree in 1985, he had taken his place at the corporate end of the New York fashion industry, as an executive first with Tod's of Italy and later with Hermès. By the early 2000s, he had migrated to film, then television, finally landing in 2006 at HBO as head of global licensing. His experience there, he would say later, had some useful parallels to the duties he would face in Madrid:

"A diplomatic mission, like a company, is comprised of multiple departments, all of which must be relied upon to move business forward. ... I managed by empowerment, and developed my team to make decisions that allowed them to take ownership of their work. ... The same will be true of my tenure as ambassador."

But it was before his HBO days, while he was still a fashion executive, that he met the man who would be his life partner, an interior designer named Michael Smith. Over time, the two joined their lives—and had been together nearly a decade when, in 2009, Smith was chosen to redecorate the residential quarters of the Obama White House. Both Democrats and well-connected, they raised over \$500,000 for Barack Obama's reelection campaign. The invitation to Madrid came in the spring of 2013.

"I am proud to serve as one of five gay ambassadors chosen by President Obama, who is sending a clear message to the world that he is committed to full equality for LGBT people," Costos told his swearing-in audience last August. "These are historic times, and I am proud to recognize them today."

Solomont had served four years as ambassador before he was succeeded by Costos last August. As different as the two men are, and as are the routes they took to get there, the bond they share, says Solomont, goes as deep as the deepest roots:

"Think about it. Another son of immigrants, another kid from Lowell. That could only happen in this country. I think maybe it could only happen in Lowell." ■



# ▶ ANALOG DEVICES:

## A PARTNER THROUGH THE YEARS

BY GEOFFREY DOUGLAS

THE BEST RELATIONSHIPS, WHETHER IN LIFE OR IN BUSINESS, ARE USUALLY THOSE THAT BENEFIT BOTH PARTIES MORE OR LESS EQUALLY AND—IDEALLY—THAT SUCCEED ON MORE THAN ONE LEVEL.

**T**ake the University's longtime alliance with Analog Devices Inc., the half-century old, multi-national semiconductor company based in Norwood. A profile of this union could begin almost anywhere you look: with the scholarship program the company funds, providing internships to four undergraduate electrical and chemical engineering (ECE) students during the winter and summer vacations; or with the company's executives—currently there are three—who rotate membership on the ECE's industrial advisory board; or the long history of joint engineering ventures among students, faculty and Analog engineers; or, finally, with the almost countless UMass Lowell alumni who have launched, and often finished, their careers at ADI.

The joint ventures alone make for a powerful bond. There have been devices to assist the disabled, controller boards for robots, numerous collaborative research projects, a certificate program in engineering skills run out of the University's Continuing Education program, and—as recently as this past fall—a portable “lab in a box,” co-created by UMass Lowell students, ADI and Digilent Inc., that engineering students can run off a laptop from almost anywhere (read the details on page 16).

But probably the most ambitious and longest-standing cooperation has come in the area of jobs. Analog, a \$15 billion company with plants or design centers in at least 11 countries and more than 9,000 employees worldwide—2,000 in Massachusetts alone—has been hiring UMass Lowell graduates for as long as anyone at the company, or the University, can remember. There are at least 100 working there now, according to Beth Koenigsbauer, an HR consultant for ADI: “And that includes just those who've identified themselves as graduates. There are almost certainly more than that.”

“You walk around here, you're going to run across a lot of alumni,” says Tom Dean, an ADI product and test engineer—and himself a UMass Lowell grad, '91, '92—who's been with the company nearly 20 years.

Among the most lucrative sources of prospective employees, says Dean, have been the University's twice-yearly career fairs, at which he's been serving as ADI's liaison for the past 15 years. The October fair, he says, general-

ly yields the larger number of new hires—many of them ECE seniors looking for employment following graduation—while the April event is more likely to be a source of summer interns.

“I'd say we take anywhere from five to 10 interns [from UMass Lowell] every summer,” Dean says. “The internships are a useful tool for us. For the students, too, I think. We think of them sort of as three-month interviews.” (Plans for a co-op program—which will likely offer students a January-June stint with the company, which Dean says will be the equivalent of “six-month interviews”—are currently in the works.)

And though ECE students normally make up the majority of those hired, they aren't the only ones, says Koenigsbauer.

“We have UMass Lowell graduates all across the company, in a number of disciplines: quality control, distribution, manufacturing—one of the people I work with, in HR, is a graduate. UMass Lowell is definitely one of our ‘team schools,’ an important source of talent for us, in a wide range of roles,” she says.

The good feelings go both ways.

“It's clear that ADI recognizes the contribution our students can make,” says Jessica Pacquin, an assistant director in the University's Career Services Center, who works principally with students from the College of Engineering. “They're one of our most valued employers, and one of our longest-standing. Tom Dean is a presence at every career fair. That's a great relationship to have.”

In the end, though, for all the excellent symbiosis that clearly exists between the company and the University it draws from, the most personal endorsement probably comes from Dean. Given his varied and long-standing role in the relationship, he is qualified to articulate what stands out about the UMass Lowell student:

“Students from UMass Lowell seem to thrive in a lab environment,” he says. “They're roll-up-your sleeves types, most of them, comfortable getting their hands dirty. And they have strong discipline, very strong discipline—and the motivation to investigate, the motivation to succeed. Those are the types of people we want.” ■



**“UMASS LOWELL IS DEFINITELY ONE OF OUR ‘TEAM SCHOOLS,’ AN IMPORTANT SOURCE OF TALENT FOR US, IN A WIDE RANGE OF ROLES.”**





# From the Stockroom to the Boardroom':

## A Story of Hard Work, Good Luck and the Power of a Marriage

BY GEOFFREY DOUGLAS

Jerry Colella wanted to teach high school. It was the late spring of 1978; he'd just graduated from the University with his B.S. in secondary education. His older sister was a teacher already, as was his girlfriend Joyce. It just seemed to him, he says today, "like a good way to make a living, a good thing to do with your life."

But no one was hiring. At least not in southern New Hampshire (where Joyce, whom he'd met in their student days at ULowell, had a job at an elementary school) or in the Haverhill area (where they planned to be living after they were married that fall). So, while he continued to look for teacher openings, he took the only job he could find: in the stockroom at a now-defunct typesetting-equipment company, "putting things into boxes and taking things out."

There were some hard times. The first year they owned their home, he remembers: "We were just scraping by, could barely pay the mortgage, and then the heating system went. There was nothing we could do, nowhere to turn—you just squeeze the budget tighter, look for a second job, get by however you can."

Hard times were nothing new to Jerry Colella. He'd grown up in Haverhill, the son of a shipping clerk and a piece-worker at a shoe factory, neither of whom had made it past eighth grade. His college summers were spent sweeping floors in a Haverhill machine shop; on weekends he clerked in a variety store—and between the two, the tuition got paid. It was a path he credits his sister Mary, the first in the family to attend college, with blazing years before. "She showed the way for all of us," he says. (Mary Colella Larcome, Lowell State '68, who taught school in Haverhill for 39 years, died last year at the age of 66.)

The stockroom job lasted three years, and was followed by a purchasing manager job at a printing company in Chelmsford. Somewhere along the line, he gave up on his teaching aspirations and came to believe, as he puts it, that "I might have a flair for business." In 1983, he landed a job as purchasing manager at a 20-year old, small-sized technology company in Burlington: MKS Instruments. He and Joyce were still living in Haverhill, still struggling. She was teaching at an elementary school in New Hampshire; their first child, Anthony, had been born the year before. The new job needed to be right.

"I think they were doing about \$20 million in revenues when I came onboard," he says today. "Still pretty small. But they were growing fast, they were taking on new things. That was part of what attracted me."

That was 30 years ago. As the company grew and thrived, Colella rose within it: from purchasing manager to VP of materials, then VP of global operations, chief business officer, chief operating officer, president—and, finally, he became president and CEO effective Jan. 1. Along the way he went back to school at night for his MBA.

The Colellas' fortunes rose alongside Jerry's career. In 1986, they moved to Lowell and Joyce left teaching to raise two children—daughter Acelyn was born in 1986—and work part-time in a department store. In 1991 she went back to teaching, this time in Lowell, but has since retired.

Jerry, meanwhile, with the financial pressures easing, was able to revisit his own early dreams of teaching. For 14 years beginning in the late 1990s, he taught night-school business courses at Merrimack College and Southern New Hampshire University. "It helped me to realize that I really had something to offer," he says.

The company he runs today bears little resemblance to the company he joined in April 1983, with just two plants and few employees. Today, the Andover-based MKS Instruments is a global supplier of equipment to the semiconductor, medical and pharmaceutical markets, with more than 20 facilities in 12 countries, over 2,400 employees and more than \$600 million in sales. MKS went public 14 years ago; its market value today exceeds \$1.6 billion.

And its president is happy and financially secure—with two children through college, a great income, a home on the coast of New Hampshire and another in Florida.

"Joyce and I, we look at each other sometimes and just say, 'Wow, look what we've been able to do'—two people with next to nothing, ending up with what we have. We worked hard to earn it, but it's still amazing, I think. We're so fortunate to be where we are."

More and more lately, he's been sharing the good fortune. Since 2006, the year he joined the Advisory Board of the Manning School of Business (then the College of Management)—"and saw what could be accomplished, what was actually within reach"—he has been giving to the University at an increasingly generous pace of both his time and money.

"We reached the point where we could take care of ourselves, where the kids were taken care of, where we had everything we need—that's when it was time to give back. [Anthony Colella, 31, a graduate of the Rhode Island School of Design, is a toy designer at Hasbro; his sister, Acelyn, 27, is pursuing her post-doctorate in veterinary medicine.] I wasn't used to having money—I'm still not, really—but we're comfortable now, and the education I got at the University, it had a lot to do with that. I learned discipline there; I learned communication skills, I learned how to learn. Those lessons are worth something. So this is a way to show our gratitude—so that someone else won't have to struggle quite as so hard."

"We reached the point where we could take care of ourselves, where the kids were taken care of, where we had everything we need—that's when it was time to give back."

The Colellas' generosity so far has exceeded \$100,000, much of it in a single gift last year for the Manning School of Business. But the pace has been picking up lately, and with any luck at all, says Jerry, the final total should reach a number several times that large.

"Jerry and Joyce Colella understand, in an intensely personal way, the value of an affordable, quality education," says Edward Chiu, vice chancellor of university advancement. "They also understand the vital importance of public education to the future of our economy. Their gifts to the University are a testament both to their wisdom and their commitment."

Colella is uncomfortable, he says, when too much is made of his good fortune or success—"I get embarrassed, actually." But a card his wife had made for him this fall, on the occasion of his appointment to CEO, strikes the perfect tone:

"From the Stockroom to the Boardroom'—that's what she had written. And it's true, you know—it sums it up. I'm really of proud of that," he says. ■

Credit: Emily Antonelli Photography



Joyce and Jerry Colella '78 spend part of the year at their home on the ocean in Seabrook, N.H.



# Alumni Life

## Inside...

- 45 CLASS NOTES
- 52 IN MEMORIAM
- 56 EVENTS

Sarah Kirane '07 ran the 116th Boston Marathon for the Doug Flutie Jr. Foundation for Autism in memory of her late younger brother, Daniel, an adult with autism who died after a viral infection attacked his heart. At the finish line, her boyfriend, and now fiancé, Michael Coppola, surprised her by flying in, running the marathon and proposing to her in front of their family and friends. The best part, she says, was that she had no idea he was even in town or running in the race. Last year, the pair celebrated the anniversary of their engagement at the 117th marathon. "We were so affected emotionally by what happened that day," says Sarah. "We were around the corner when we heard the explosions." Sarah and Michael now live in San Diego, and as the 118th marathon approaches, Sarah says that because of last year's bombing "it's too close to home for me to run." However, as of press time, Michael was still trying to raise the funds to run for a charitable organization. "He wants to run to get back that day that was so special to us," says Sarah.

## Classnotes

ALUMNI LIFE

"GARY HUNT '69, '76, A UMASS LOWELL ALUM who works out at the Rec Center regularly and attends most of the basketball games, saw the article on Jose Molina, our Youth of the Year in the Lowell Sun. He stopped in today and is going to pay for Jose's books for the first semester and continue in the second semester if he gets a 3.0."

—Letter from Joe Hungler, executive director of the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Lowell

### 1953

**Don Finegold** has published his ninth mystery novel, "Murder in Leather Town." It's available as an e-book on Amazon.com.

### 1954

**Joseph Levy** says he began college in the Lowell Textile Institute and finished two years later in the Lowell Technological Institute. "How times changed," he says.

### 1966

**Charles Cordeau** has moved to Colorado to enjoy his retirement.

### 1969

**Jim McGuirk** published his first novel "Candi Girl," a nostalgic fictional look back at the Lowell High School Class of 1964. To purchase a copy, contact Jim at jimmcguirk26@gmail.com.

### 1970

**William Tucker**, a Lowell State alumnus and a teacher at Lowell Catholic High School for 16 years, has received the Ryken Award in recognition of his dedication to the Xaverian Brothers school. Principal Maryellen DeMarco praised Bill for his dedication to students and his work in strengthening the Social Studies Department. The award is named for Theodore Ryken, founder of the Xaverian Brothers order.

### 1971

**Ara Jeknavorian**, a research fellow at W.R. Grace & Co.

in Cambridge, has been presented with the Award of Merit by ASTM International Committee C09 on Concrete Aggregates. The award and its accompanying title of Fellow is ASTM's highest organizational recognition for individual contributions to standards activities. Ara earned a bachelor's degree in chemistry at the Lowell Technological Institute and a master's and doctorate in analytical chemistry from UMass Lowell.

### 1980

**Brian Latina** was elected chairman of the board of the Professional Center for Child Development in Andover.

**Suzanne Page**, a soprano who earned a master's degree at the New England Conservatory of Music and toured the United States and Europe with the Boston Lyric Opera Company, is back home in Lowell and is the associate director of board relations for the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Not one to take herself too seriously, Suzanne says the most exciting thing about her life now is probably her dog, who howls along with her as she sings around the house in her high-pitched soprano voice.

### 1982

**Dennis Guilfoyle** retired on Feb. 1, 2013.

### 1983

**John Traphagan** has published his seventh book, "Rethinking Autonomy: A Critique of Principalism in Biomedical



Ethics." In May, John was promoted to the rank of professor in the Department of Religious Studies

at the University of Texas at Austin, where he is also the Centennial Commission in the Liberal Arts Fellow. For the past three years, he has served as Secretary General of the Japan Anthropology Workshop, the largest organization of anthropologists who do research on Japan in the world. He lives in Austin with his wife, Tomoko, and children Sarah and Julian.



### 1984

**Lisa Brothers** is president and CEO of Nitsch Engineering, which has been recog-

nized by The Boston Globe and The Commonwealth Institute as one of the top 100 women-led businesses in Massachusetts, among for-profit companies with the largest revenue in 2012. The company is No. 58 on the list with \$11.4 million in revenue for that year. Lisa is an active alumna who served recently as chair of the College of Engineering Industrial Advisory Board.

**Mark Durrenberger '84, '88**, who formed New England Solar—later renamed New England Clean Energy—earned the Worcester Business Journal's Business Leader



and master's degrees at UMass Lowell.

**Robin Sousa** is the owner of Flounce.com, an online year-round Christmas store.

**Frank E. Warren**, composer/publisher at Frank E. Warren Music Service, has been commissioned by international concert pianist Beth Levin to write a new work for

of the Year honors in the small business and entrepreneur field in 2012. Mark earned both bachelor

solo piano entitled: "Three Glimpses of Beethoven." The Boston premiere will be held in May at the New England Conservatory, with New York City performances and other locations scheduled before and afterward. As part of the tour, Frank will be an invited guest composer, presenting seminars at local music schools.

### 1985

**Richard Weiner** celebrated his 25th wedding anniversary on Aug. 20, 2013. His eldest daughter is now attending graduate school at Florida State University and his youngest daughter is an undergraduate at FSU.

**Elena Yee** was recently featured on the Rhode Island Public Radio program "This I Believe."

Continued



### 1974

**John Murphy** sent us this photo in reaction to the news that former Yankees skipper Joe Torre was elected to Major League Baseball's Hall of Fame. He writes: "The photo features a much younger Joe Torre [then St. Louis Cardinals third baseman and National League MVP] presenting me with the Rawling's Adirondack Big Stick Award as the leading batter in New England, District I, during my senior year at Lowell State College in 1974. The photo was taken at the prestigious College Baseball Coaches Convention held in San Francisco the same year. I thought your readers, especially those from the 1970s, might find the photo interesting."



► CLOSE-UP CLASS OF 1958

# THE COMEBACK (TO LOWELL) KID

BY DAVID PERRY

Golden Gate Yacht Club Staff Commodore  
Ned Barrett Has Strong Ties to City, University

Oracle Team USA staged a stunning comeback on Sept. 25, 2013 to secure the oldest trophy in international sports: the America's Cup.

**E**DWARD “NED” BARRETT has a bead on drama.

From the home he shares with his wife of 50 years, Carole, Barrett sees the stunning Golden Gate Bridge off to the left. He can watch as the fingers of fog roll up to blanket the span in the evening, then—usually—retreat in the morning. By turning slightly, he can see the jagged knot of Alcatraz, once known for breaking the spirits of the most hardened criminals.

Just off the shore near his home, at the Golden Gate Yacht Club, the 1958 Lowell State graduate enjoyed a stellar view of September's stunning America's Cup comeback. Some of the time, he watched from the deck of the club, other times, he gazed at the 103-inch television in the clubhouse. The American squad staged an amazing come-from-behind win over the New Zealand team.

Barrett helped bring the winning team to his yacht club, despite some fierce competition.

The Americans, Oracle Team USA, defended the cup they brought home to the bay in 2010, and they didn't waste an ounce of drama, pulling out a 9-8 win after trailing the series 8-1.

“There was certainly a lot of celebrating,” says Barrett with a chuckle. “Most people thought we never had a chance once we were down.”

Lowell native Barrett has ties to UMass Lowell that are long and firm, and when he graduated, he had the rare opportunity of sharing the stage



with his own mother, who had earned a teaching certificate from Lowell Normal School in 1926, then returned to earn a bachelor's degree in education from Lowell State in '58. He oversees the administration of the Margaret Holland Barrett Teaching Scholarship, named for his mother.

A generous alumni donor, 2000 Francis Cabot Lowell Award winner and chair to the Advisory Board for the Graduate School of Education, Barrett was impressed during a recent visit to campus.

“I'm so impressed with what (Chancellor) Marty (Meehan) has done here,” he said. “It's really first-class.”

Barrett is forever thankful to his late mother, who died in 1989, for providing him an educational rudder.

He has, like his mother and siblings, been a classroom teacher. But Barrett moved on to school administration, eventually switching to the publishing world. He ascended from regional sales to the top echelons. Last year, he retired as president of the publishing company Chandler & Sharp.

“To my mother, education was paramount,” says Barrett, the middle child of five. “My mother graduated from Lowell Normal but always wanted to return to the college to earn her bachelor's degree.”

Ned, meanwhile, spent a year at Boston University following his 1954 Lowell High School graduation. Carpooling in to Boston with other Mill City students, his grades were good but he had no direction.

“College was never in doubt,” he says. “All five of us went to college

## “I WAS LOOKING FOR A STRESS RELIEVER. I WANTED TO RELAX WITH SOMETHING I ENJOYED.”

but I had no idea what I wanted to do with my life and hadn't thought about the world or my place in it.”

When an interest in teaching blossomed, he transferred to his native Lowell. “I figured, there's already a teacher's college here (in Lowell). A good one. It was an awakening,” he says.

After graduation, he taught sixth grade in Chelmsford.

In 1962, he met Carole while he waited tables in a Cape Cod restaurant to supplement his school-year salary. They married in August 1963 and had two children, Susan and Edward Jr. Carole was at home caring for them until they entered school, at which point she got a job teaching at a parochial girl's school.

Barrett—who also supplemented his pay managing apartments in Lowell's Highlands neighborhood—finally left both the Mill City and education for a position in textbook sales in 1967.

As the family moved a series of times—Ohio, New Jersey, back to Massachusetts, then California—he ascended that ladder.

“You're ready for anything when you leave UMass Lowell,” says Barrett. “And you left Lowell State prepared and able to succeed anywhere in the country.”

During one early job interview, an impressed school administrator told him, “We can't find enough people like you.”

He would eventually earn his master's in education from Salem State and his MBA from Suffolk University, which helped him reach the top of the publishing world.

Carole earned her teaching certificate and eventually decided she wanted something else of her own. She earned a scholarship from St. John's University, graduating from its law school in 1981. She headed into the intellectual property field, joining a small “boutique” firm in Manhattan. She is just now winding down her practice, says Barrett.

Upon his mother's passing in 1989, Barrett says his family suffered “a big, big loss. My father was devastated, and he was looking for a way to remember her.” They worked with Don Pierson, then dean of the College of Education, and the scholarship was established.

### THE ‘MECHANIC’ AND LARRY ELLISON

“I was looking for a stress reliever,” he says. “Lots of folks go away weekends. I wanted to relax with something I enjoyed.” He visited the Golden Gate Yacht Club, and was impressed with its more down-to-earth nature, especially when compared to the nearby St. Francis club. “No one tries to do business there. We're there to have fun. And talk boating. So we joined.”

Beneath the surface, the club was struggling. There was physical damage from the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, but it went deeper, as chronicled in the 2013 book, “The Billionaire and the Mechanic.”

The toney St. Francis club was worlds away from the casual Golden Gate, whose membership dwindled as its debt mounted.

“We struggled,” says Barrett. “And we even entertained thoughts of having to lower the flag. We were in deep financial straits.” They were, according to “The Billionaire and the Mechanic,” nearly a half-million dollars in debt. “The city,” says Barrett, “was going to foreclose.”

It was about that time that Larry Ellison, billionaire and co-founder of Oracle Corp., was looking for a home for his racing club in his quest to land the 2003 America's Cup. When negotiations broke down with the St. Francis, Ellison went over to the Golden Gate.

In late 2001, Ned and Carole Barrett and Golden Gate commodore Norbert Bajurin visited Ellison after an Oracle event in San Francisco. They were impressed by his down-to-earth nature.

And they were even more impressed when Ellison and his BMW Oracle Racing team brought home the 2010 America's Cup, the first American yacht club to capture it since 1995.

“Oracle coming in was certainly not the solution we had in mind,” says Barrett, smiling. “But it's been a great relationship for all of us.”

Barrett served as the Golden Gate's commodore in 2003 and 2004, and has been its staff commodore since 2005.

“You know, if you hang around long enough, they ask you to do something involving the management of the club,” he says.

His children live in the Bay Area. Susan is a homemaker in Mill Valley, using her CPA to work for a foundation raising money for local schools. Edward Jr. is an engineer who works for Sony Corp. and its Playstation PS4 product.

Barrett greatly enjoys his five grandchildren. In fact, he adds, one of Edward Jr.'s sons, a budding engineer, has applied to UMass Lowell.

He chuckles at the thought of seeing his grandson graduate from the same college. “That would be a happy sight,” he says. ■



► CLOSE-UP CLASS OF 1974

## CHANGING COUNTRIES, CHANGING PLANES

For Jim Patch '74, from as early as he can remember, it was all about flying.

"From my first flight in my uncle's airplane when I was boy, I'd always wanted to be a pilot," he says. "I always loved watching aircraft in the sky. It was a blessing to know early on exactly what I wanted to do."

He has done it—and much more. Since graduating from Lowell Tech in 1974 as the senior cadet group commander of his Air Force ROTC class, he has covered a lot of ground—and a lot of airspace. With over 3,300 hours piloting a half-dozen different Air Force jet fighters, including several that saw use in Vietnam or Desert Storm, he has made nearly 200 aircraft carrier landings; he served in at least seven foreign countries, and trained untold numbers of young pilots to fly. He has also served as part of a NATO defense force in two nations and as attaché at a U.S. Embassy. Since retiring from the Air Force eight years ago, he has held varied positions in the aerospace defense industry.

It began at Webb Air Force Base in Texas, where he went for pilot training in 1975, not long after his LTI graduation. Then it was off to Homestead AFB in Florida, where he learned to fly the F-4 Phantom, a multi-purpose fighter that saw heavy use in Vietnam. Not long after, he started a tour in the Netherlands, where he flew the F-4 in an air defense role during the Cold War.

There wasn't much he didn't do after that: scores of carrier landings on the USS Nimitz and USS Theodore Roosevelt; assignments at bases in New Mexico, Virginia and Florida—where he was responsible, following Desert Storm, for a force of 25 combat-ready pilots; NATO postings in Bosnia, Iceland and Italy; and

a period as chief of operations and training, by now as a colonel, at Ramstein Air Base in Germany.

"There wasn't a lot of continuity to my [military] career. I always seemed to be moving on to a new aircraft and uncharted territory," Patch says. "Each time it was a different job, calling for a different set of skills—always a new learning curve. I enjoy those kinds of challenges, though."

His last assignment, he says, was probably his favorite, at least of those that didn't involve flying: as the air attaché at the U.S. Embassy in Oslo—and, eventually, as "doyen" (president) of the Service Attaché Association there—from 2002 until his retirement three years later.

"There were 22 attachés there, from 16 different countries, most with their spouses. A culturally diverse group. My wife and I made a lot of life-long friends in Oslo. It was a very rewarding time," he says.

Things have settled down a little since then. He retired from the Air Force eight years ago and settled in Colorado Springs, where he now works as regional sales lead of military aftermarket sales with United Technologies Corporation (UTC) Aerospace Systems, among the world's largest suppliers of aerospace and defense products. His largest customers include his old employer, the Air Force, as well as the Navy, the Coast Guard and NASA. He also leads business development efforts for UTC's rocket-powered ejection seats for fighter and bomber aircraft.

It's been awhile since he's been in the cockpit of a fighter. But the itch he was born with—for the sky—seems to have jumped the generations. He and his wife, a former Navy officer he met in Iceland, today have a son in eighth grade:

"He wants to go to the Air Force Academy. And he can see it looking out the window every day." ■



1986

Dracut Music Centre, owned and operated by David Chandonnet, is celebrating 20 years in business. Dave says the company is a full-line music store with a music lesson program and that many of its teachers are UMass Lowell graduates.

Michael McGovern is a senior vice president and chief technology officer at Metro Credit Union in Chelsea.

1988

Elaina Napoli Corcoran, wife of Brian Corcoran '87, is vice president of operations at Solidus Technical Solutions, Inc., a small majority veteran and woman-owned business working for the Department of Defense and other government agencies. Elaina says Solidus is dedicated to providing unparalleled service to its employees, partners and customers.

Continued



## Oh, Romeo, wherefore art thou showing?

Movie-goers are experiencing the power of the theater thanks to alumna Bonnie Comley '81. The 2013 Broadway production of "Romeo and Juliet"—starring Orlando Bloom (above, left) and Condola Rashad (above, right) as the star-crossed couple—is being shown in cinemas across North America.

As part of an initiative called BroadwayHD—co-created by Tony Award-winning producers Comley and her husband, Stewart Lane—live performances were filmed in high-definition and are presented to the general public at their local movie theaters through a partnership with Screenvision.

Comley and Lane's commitment to the theater world runs deep; a gift from the couple in 2007 allowed UMass Lowell to renovate its stage in Mahoney Hall on South Campus and rename it the Comley-Lane Theatre. Comley, a native of Bedford, was the 2010 recipient of UMass Lowell's Distinguished Alumni Award. For showtimes and tickets, visit [www.BroadwayHD.com](http://www.BroadwayHD.com).

► CLOSE-UP CLASS OF 1989

## Charting a Leader's Path: Building on Math Skills and a Father's Faith



In high school, Kim Sawyer '89 was such a whiz at math that her algebra teacher once asked her to take over the class. She recalls this today, she says, as a something of a formative moment: "Being a naturally shy person, that inspired a lot of confidence in me."

Her father meanwhile, something of a whiz himself, also discerned her abilities and encouraged her to pursue them. It wasn't the sort of advice that girls, more than 30 years ago, generally got from their fathers—which helped enable her, she says today, "to overcome certain perceptions about women in technical disciplines."

She has more than overcome them. In the years since then, Sawyer has managed billion-dollar budgets, supervised technology workforces that numbered in the thousands, overseen the IT operations of two global mega-firms—Xerox and Coca-Cola—and worked with customers on both sides of the Atlantic and beyond. Today, as deputy labs director and executive vice president for mission support at Sandia National Laboratories in New Mexico—a major U.S. Department of Energy R&D facility, owned by Lockheed Martin—her responsibilities include business operations, finance, IT, infrastructure operation and corporate governance.

As daunting as all this sounds, it is no less than the life she had scripted for herself. Ever since her undergraduate days at Robert Morris University in Pittsburgh, then later at ULowell as a master's degree candidate in math and computing, she had foreseen herself, she says, in an executive-leadership role.

"My reality today is very close to what I'd envisioned," she says. "I think I knew even then that a solid foundation in IT, by giving me the opportunity to immerse myself in different aspects of a business, would prepare me for something like this."

She grew up, the oldest of four children, in a community outside Pittsburgh—in a home "where we did everything together and were treated always as a team." By the time she was 16, she was working part-time, first for a chiropractor, later in a real-estate office, both jobs, she says, adding to her "sense of what it was to be part of a business environment" and further cementing her resolve.

Then came college, then grad school, always with a job alongside: as a systems analyst at DuPont, a programmer at TRW, an information specialist at Lockheed Martin. Then, in the 1990s, the first real leadership posts: two years as CIO at Xerox, followed by nearly three as corporate director at Coca-Cola—each job with its IT functions, budgetary responsibilities and a need to think outside the box:

"If there was one thing I learned at both companies, it was that however successful a particular practice, solution or approach might be in one culture, it could have the opposite effect somewhere else."

There was a second lesson she learned: that for all the high-tech systems and data-crunching involved, the bottom-line is always human.

"What I saw [in both jobs] was a core need by everyone to feel valued and respected," she says.

It is this last lesson, at least as much as her IT skills or flair for math, that has driven her these last several years, both in and out of the office. It is what lies behind the work she has done to improve team-building at Sandia Labs—"Keep the communication lines open," she implored her colleagues at the conclusion of a recent group meeting, "because we are so much stronger when we work together"—and to foster STEM education for young girls (passing on the legacy of support she once got from her father), to raise \$28 million for New Mexico's United Way, or donate her time to Habitat for Humanity.

Because for all her business successes or titles accrued, she says: "One of my proudest accomplishments has been in coming to New Mexico and having the opportunity to touch the lives of others." ■





1990

**Henry Chen** '90,'93, '96 has been awarded the 2013 RTSD Scientist Award by IEEE (Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers). This award is given only once a year for the most distinguished scientist in the field of RTSD. He says it is a special honor for him personally, for UMass Lowell, and for the City of Lowell. Henry is highly regarded internationally in the field of solid-state radiation sensors, with more than 80 publications in scientific journals and participation in 10 U.S. patents. He is currently an associate editor and senior technical reviewer for the IEEE Transactions on Nuclear Science and IEEE Sensors journals.

1994

**Ben Panulo** is a lecturer at the University of Eastern Africa, Baraton and is also the academic coordinator for the University's Finland Project, a job that takes him to Finland, Egypt and other countries. He reports that the work of spreading medical laboratory science across the African

continent is going very well and is proud to say that his students are involved in much of the research. "I am glad I returned to Africa after my studies, where I am needed most," he says.

1996

**Skip Williams** has been named the director of global supplier quality for the Leviton Manufacturing Co., headquartered in Melville, N.Y. Leviton is the largest privately held manufacturer of electrical wiring devices in North America. Skip earned his B.S. in mechanical engineering from UMass Lowell and lives with his wife and two children in Wantagh, N.Y.

1997

**Andrew Despres** moved to the west coast in the fall of 2010 and is working for Intel. His previous employers were Inland Empire Media Group, Bose Corp., Falmouth Community Television, ATI (AMD) Research and Spacetec IMC.

**Joel Garrett** '97, '13, who received his doctorate from the

School of Health and Environment, is president of Summit Lubricants, a subsidiary of Quaker Chemical (KWR). Joel also holds an M.B.A. from Babson College. He lives in Windham, N.H., with his wife and four children.

1999

**Roberta McCollum's** years of service to business were recognized recently when the North Andover accounting firm of Toscano & Ardito PC became Ardito, Toscano & McCollum, PC. "We are thrilled to recognize Roberta for all her contributions to the firm's success," says partner and President Lawrence Ardito. Roberta earned an M.B.A. at UMass Lowell.

**Michael** '99 '05 and **Kelly Wall** had their third baby in April. They now have a family of five.

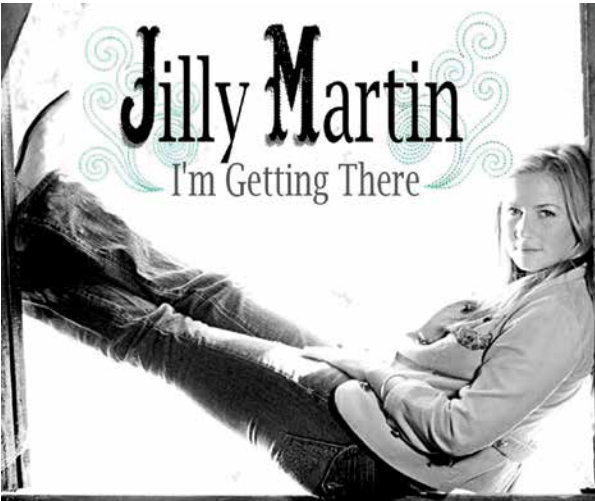
2000

**Zoila Gomez**, an attorney and UMass trustee, was a leader of Daniel Rivera's transition team when

he was elected mayor of Lawrence in 2013. Zoila earned her law degree in 2005 from the Massachusetts School of Law in Andover and was appointed a UMass trustee by Gov. Deval Patrick in 2011. Her law practice specializes in immigration issues.

2001

**Phyllis A. Gimbel** had her second book, "Healthy Schools, The Hidden Component of Teaching and Learning," published in October 2013. Phyllis has enjoyed a lengthy career in education, serving as middle school principal, foreign language department chair and French and Spanish teacher. She is associate professor of educational leadership in the Department of Secondary Education and Professional



2008

Chelmsford resident and country musician **Jilly Martin** auditioned for "American Idol" at Gillette Stadium this summer—skipping the line of thousands after impressing judges earlier during a Fox 25 News performance of "America the Beautiful." Unfortunately, she didn't make it through to Jennifer Lopez et al, but since then she's been focusing on songwriting—and in January moved to Nashville to continue writing and recording. Before she left, she performed on Dec. 27 at Boston's Hard Rock Café; the set included her new single called "I'm Getting There"—check it out on iTunes and YouTube. Visit [www.jillymartin.com](http://www.jillymartin.com) for updates.

Programs at Bridgewater State University, where she has served as assistant coordinator of Writing Across the Curriculum and as Faculty Fellow in the Office of Teaching and Learning.

2002

**D. Jeffrey Cronin** is engaged to Lauren Lee Woodward, a landscape architect with the Cambridge firm of Gregory Lombardi Design. Jeffrey, who earned a master's degree in atmospheric sciences, is with the environmental engineering firm of Woodward & Curran in Andover.

**Kristine Drust** has joined her husband, Don, on the coaching staff of Cheshire High School in Connecticut. Don is the school's football coach and Kristine has been named coach of the softball

team. Kristine, who had been an assistant coach for the Central Connecticut softball team for three years, was a two-time All America catcher at UMass Lowell. She later played professionally for the New England Riptide in the National Pro Fastpitch League until 2006.



**Robert Ernest Farrell**, who has retired as an associate professor at Penn State University, says that for most of his life he has been interested in ufology. Twenty years ago, he began doing serious research for his science fiction series of novels, including, "Alien Log," and "Alien Log II: The New World Order." He believes

Continued

► CLOSE-UP CLASS OF 1990

Of Freckles and Fur, and 60-Hour Workweeks:  
The Life of a Disney Artist

If you've seen any Disney animated films in recent years—"Tangled," based loosely on the German fairy tale "Rapunzel," or "Bolt," about a small white dog who believes he has super powers, or "Wreck-it Ralph," about an arcade-game villain turned hero—and can picture in your mind the endlessly long hair of the beautiful princess trapped in her tower, or the dog's enormous black nose or the villain's squared-off shoulders, you have some idea of what John Huikku '90 does for a living.



He is a look development artist for Walt Disney Animation Studios—which involves, he explains, pretty much what it sounds like: "developing the look" of whatever is called for. Working digitally from a 3D model, he says, "We make metal look like metal, put freckles on a character's cheeks, hair on its head, fur on an animal—whatever the subject is that day. It's pretty incredible stuff."

His latest effort, "Frozen," a comedy-adventure about a mystical kingdom trapped in eternal winter, was released over Thanksgiving—and had the largest opening ever for Disney Animation.

Huikku has been at Disney for nearly a decade—first as a lighting artist and lately in look development—and has had his hand in roughly a dozen films, including those mentioned above, as well as "A Christmas Carol" and the 3D conversions of "Lion King" and "Beauty and the Beast." Before that he spent nine months in New Zealand as a texture artist and matte painter for Weta Digital's "Lord of the Rings."

It seems to have all begun, though, at the University of Lowell in the late 1980s, around the time he switched his major to art from electrical engineering and began spending time in the Art Department's computer lab, often with Jim Veatch, today the department's chair.

"That was back in the pre-World Wide Web days," he says. "It was all new, all self-led exploration, a different world from today. ... Jim and I, we did some pretty cool stuff."

Huikku graduated in 1990, and for the next two years continued to work at the University's Interactive Media Group, a job he'd held during his undergraduate days. In 1995, following short stints as a test engineer and video editor at projects in Massachusetts and New York, he got a call from a former ULowell classmate Terrence Masson, who offered him a job as visual effects artist with a start-up in California, SimEx Digital Studios. From there, it was a half-hour's drive north to the home of Dream Quest Images in Simi Valley—just acquired by Disney—where he would find himself 18 months later, in the fall of 1996.

The next few years were a creative time for Dream Quest and its new visual effects artist—spawning "Mission to Mars," "Inspector Gadget," "Flubber," "Bicentennial Man," "Armageddon," "George of the Jungle"—but nothing close to the period that would follow. Since 2004, the year he arrived at Disney, at least six of the films he's had a hand in—led by "Tangled" and "Wreck-it Ralph"—have been among the 100 top-grossing animated films in history, with close to \$1 billion in lifetime receipts. "Frozen" is on track to join the ranks.



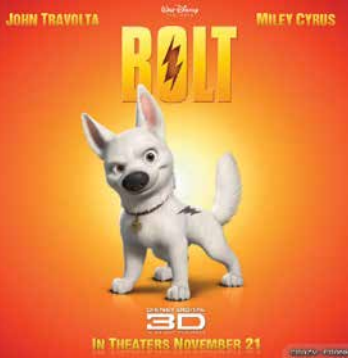
With a pace as frenzied as this, and the eight- and nine-figure stakes, the job, he says, can be a grind sometimes: "When we were shooting 'Bolt' [in 2008, with Huikku doing both lighting and look development], I was working 60-hour weeks, for almost 10 months straight. It can get really, really crazy."

And Hollywood itself, he says, for all its shimmer, can sometimes seem like an alien planet to a transplant from Worcester:

"It's basically desert here. There are no lakes, no ponds or rivers like we have in New England. We can't take our kids to the water [Huikku is married to Irish portrait artist Siuan McGahan].

"And the weather ... I wouldn't even mind a real New England winter right now." ■

*Editor's Note: The magazine has learned that, shortly prior to publication, Huikku left his job at Disney to accept a position at Brown Bag Studios, an Irish computer-animation company based in Dublin.*



John Huikku '90 worked on the animation for Disney films like Tangled, Bolt, Frozen, Beauty and the Beast and Wreck it Ralph.



BY GEOFFREY DOUGLAS

► CLOSE-UP CLASS OF 2009

# The New Math: Calculus with a Hip-Hop Beat

**H**e is “Mr. Plourde” or “Professor” to his students. Unless they know him out of class, in which case he’s “Lyrical.” He teaches freshman math at Northeastern, speaks succinctly about calculus and statistics in front of a chalkboard in buttoned-up shirt and tie—except when he’s spitting rap couplets at machine-gun speed at a club gig in black leather, baseball cap and shades.

“What I do,” he says, “is kind of off the map.”

Ya think?

Peter Plourde ’93, ’09 is a 40-something husband and father from Somerville, a math professor with a bachelor’s in business and a master’s in math who says he “sees the world through economics”—but wants to change it through rap. He’s a yuppie with the heart of a hipster, a middle-aged rapper who dreams of founding the world’s first “free-standing university that would use hip-hop to reach kids.” It’s a vision that goes something like this:

*...And Elements like Euclid, intelligence I’m using it/  
Mathematically fusing It, rap classes and music with/  
Students at universities, universally proving it/  
Arithmetically, choosing loops in a strategy/  
Like Arabs algebraically battling back the Pharisees...*

(from “Put ‘Em All to Shame” by Peter Plourde, album released 2013)

How do you come to view the world through such a lens?

You grow up poor, but very smart—the son of parents from the projects. You watch your father toil through years of night school, then, at nearly 40, earn his degree in engineering. There is more money after that, less struggle—and you think, “I want one of those.” But at school, because “it wasn’t cool to be smart,” you spend your class-time doodling out rhymes. At home—because it’s the 80s, and you’re a teen and hip-hop is huge in the streets—you practice rap tunes, picking out lines on a guitar with missing strings. Then you move with your family to another town and another, better school—where smart is OK, even cool. And you learn that you’re a whiz at math, and that you like it. But that you can still make rhymes too, and spit rap. You begin to understand that there’s not such a difference between things.

“Hip-hop is an attitude,” says Plourde today. “You can be 18, you can be 48. You can wear jeans, you can wear a suit. The attitude is what makes it.”

The attitude, for Plourde, took root early. A product of the streets and public schools of Lowell during some of the city’s grittiest years, he came young to the hip-hop culture, but also to the



daily grind-down of urban poverty. “All that stuff they talk about—the ‘disparity of wealth’ and all—I saw that, I lived that. It’s what got me so heavy into economics. Economics as a social science. That’s what pushed me into this critical ideology I have,” he says.

His first success as a rapper came in the mid-’90s, with a group called X-Caliber, based out of his Mass Mills apartment in Lowell. He was just out of UMass Lowell, with his newly minted business degree, and had landed his first real-world job, with Enterprise-Rent-a-Car—whose prime perk, he says today, was all the free round-trips to New York to record in the West Side apartment of a big-time rap producer.

“Free transportation and a paycheck,” he says. “That was my big business plan.”

By 1998 he’d given up on the corporate world and returned to his roots in Lowell, where he took a job teaching at-risk teens at Lowell High—“the ‘throwaways,’ one administrator termed them. “I more identified with those kids,” he would say later. “I felt that if I hadn’t been able to go to high school in Chelmsford [after the family’s move there], I would have been one of them.”

He has been a teacher ever since: at Middlesex Community College, Lasell College in Newton and for the last four years at Northeastern—where he teaches math in the university’s Foundation Year Program, comprised of first-generation college students, most of them Hispanic and black. He also lectures at schools and colleges throughout the Boston area, on everything from the hip-hop culture to the importance of a STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) education. He sometimes records with his students; his song lyrics are often drawn from classroom themes.

During his first year at Northeastern, he says, he kept strictly to “Mr. Plourde,” and to the business of math—until homecoming weekend, when “Lyrical” emerged unexpectedly from nowhere, spitting rap. By now, with his second album (“Put ‘Em All to Shame”) climbing the rap charts, and Lyrical a long-time veteran of the Boston hip-hop scene, the rap artist and the math teacher have long since merged:

*I teach mathematics in the University classes/  
Make music with my students, the fusion’s fantas-*

*tic...*

“I call it the ‘Obama effect,’” he says. “You know how the President will fist-bump with his wife so the kids in the audience will see he’s down with them? My students, they hear me do hip-hop, they hear my stories, they know I’m with them, that I’ve been there, that I’m not some stuffy professor talking down at them. So then when I tell them things, they’re probably going to listen.

“I tell them about the power of math. I tell them, ‘Trust me, STEM is where the jobs are. You want to stay in school. You want to know the math.’” ■

good science fiction is based on good science and is trying to follow the style of Michael Crichton and Arthur C. Clarke in his Odyssey series by wrapping stories around scientific facts. Recently, he completed a nonfiction book, “The Science behind Alien Encounters,” which is based on his lecture series of the same name. He received his engineering degree from UMass Lowell.

2003

**Pascha McTyson** ’03, ’09 began a new job in August 2012 as director of the Center of Student Activities, Leadership and Service at New York University.

2004

**Jarrod Brown** has earned a “Math Hero Award” and a grant of \$2,500 from Raytheon Co. as one of 35 full-time math teachers nationwide “who have made great strides in instilling a love of math in students and for dedication to enriching math instruction.” A resident of Dracut, Jarrod teaches at Central Catholic High School in Lawrence.

2006

**Aleece D’Onofrio** ’06, ’13 was named the 2012 Massachusetts Young Professional of the year by the American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC) of Massachusetts and also earned recognition from the National Engineers Week Foundation in its 2013 program. She also represented ACEC as one of five young professional engineers in the 2013 National Engineers Week “New Faces of Engineering” advertised in USA Today.

**Danielle Niles** was named weekend morning meteorologist at CBS Boston’s WBZ-TV. A native of Weymouth, Danielle was most recently at New England Cable News, where she spent five years as weekday morning meteorolo-



2009

**Krista Perry and Anthony Patronick**, both from the Class of 2009, were married on Oct. 27, 2013. They even took some wedding pictures right here on campus.



2011

**David Carter** has graduated from basic military training at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland in San Antonio, Texas.

**Kathleen Crowley Crews** has moved to Lowell from the Washington, D.C., area. She completed her UMass Lowell degree online and didn’t set foot on campus until the spring of her graduation year. Now she lives between the Tsongas Center and LeLacheur Park. She says her experience at the University had a lot to do with her decision to move her family to New England, especially to Lowell. She is happy to be home.

2012

**Justin Wilson** ’12, ’13 has moved to Juneau, Ala., to work for the state Department of Transportation and Public Facilities.

**Sarah Housekeeper and David Leacu** ’13 were married on June 1, 2013 in Upton. Sarah graduated with a degree in biology and is a molecular

Continued



technologist at Charles River Laboratories in Wilmington. Dave earned a bachelor's degree in computer science and is a software engineer with Chase PaymentTech in Salem, N.H. The couple lives in Pelham, N.H.

**Cam Kneeland**, who batted .325 in his four years on the River Hawk baseball team, has been signed to a minor league contract by the Baltimore Orioles. Cam was named 2013 Rookie of the Year

after hitting .306 for the independent Can-Am League's Trois-Rivières Aigles. The Rowley native played for the Worcester Tornadoes in 2012.



**Amanda Landers** completed her master's degree in work environment at UMass Lowell in

2012 after graduating summa cum laude with a bachelor's degree in environmental health from Illinois State University in 2010. Her academic focus was occupational and environmental health. After graduating from UMass Lowell, she accepted a position as the environmental health and safety leader at Advanced Filtration Systems Inc. in Champaign, Ill.

**Meghan Lovett** has graduated from AmeriCorps' National Civilian Community Corps. The organization engages

more than 80,000 Americans in intensive service each year at nonprofits, schools, public agencies and community and faith-based groups across the country.

#### 2013

Criminal Justice alum **Brian Bowe**, classmate Cory Lach and friend Liam Keogh attended game two of the World Series at Fenway Park thanks to Prof. Charlie Virga. "Since taking his class, we have become great friends and he offers seats to sports events for groups of students to go and have the time of our lives—everything from B.C. football games, to AFC championship games at Gillette to Bruins playoff tickets," says Bowe. "He is truly the most influential teacher I had at school—and he deserves recognition.

**Liam Crawford** has been living in Washington, D.C., since the final semester of his undergraduate studies at UMass Lowell. He completed his degree with the credits he earned through an internship at TechAmerica, a technology trade association. Upon completing his internship, he was offered a junior lobbying position as coordinator of federal government affairs. He says he looks forward to working with UMass Lowell students



interested in public policy and is eager to provide guidance and networking advice to any student new to the D.C. area. He hopes that his organization and UMass Lowell can partner to offer students internship opportunities rarely rivaled inside the beltway.

**David Leacu** married **Sarah Housekeeper '12** in June 2013. (See 2012 note.)

**Anthony Prestigiovanni**, who graduated with a degree in music education, was an instructor last year in the Somerville Public Schools Summer Wind Camp. The camp is open to all wind and percussion players who have played for at least one school year. ■

#### ► CLOSE-UP CLASS OF 2013

### No Business like (Shaved) Snow Business

BY JILL GAMBON

Curious about the long lines snaking outside shops offering "shaved snow" in Southern California, Jennifer Ho decided to try the frosty dish during a visit there two years ago. The Taiwanese dessert, a culinary mash-up of ice cream and shaved ice, was a revelation to Ho, then a Manning School of Business student. Hooked, she sampled several flavors during her vacation.

"I fell in love with it," recalls Ho, who graduated in May 2013. "There was nothing like this at home."

Sensing an opportunity, Ho decided to bring the frozen confection to Lowell. Before she even had her bachelor's degree in hand, she started putting together plans for a business. Working with her fiancé, Nyden Heng, Ho secured permits, arranged financing, ordered equipment, created a menu, developed a logo and selected the shop's décor. Her sister, Julie Ho, a December 2013 Manning School graduate, helped out with marketing and other duties.

Last August, "Snowdaes," a bright, airy establishment opened on Westford Street, just a couple of miles from campus. The menu features numerous flavors of shaved snow including mango, green tea and coffee, and accompanying toppings and drizzles. Bubble tea, smoothies, milkshakes and panini are also available.

"It's been going really well," says Ho. "The next step is to go mobile. We want to have a food truck next summer. And I definitely want to open another store."

Ho is involved with every aspect of the business from working the counter to handling finances and managing inventory. Her Manning School classes in accounting and leadership prepared her well for starting her own company, something she has always wanted to do.

"I'm getting a 360-degree view of running a business," she says.



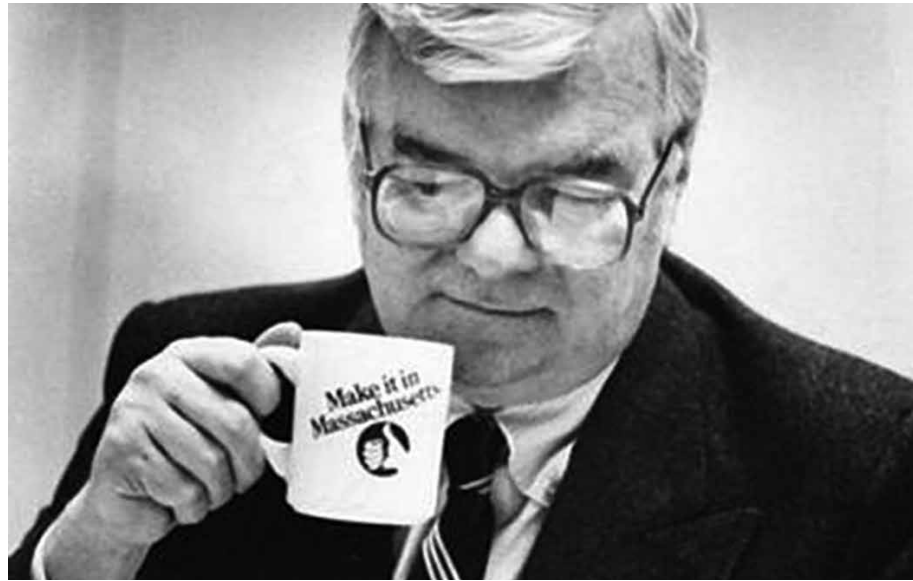
Credit: Emily Antonelli Photography

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## John Duff, First President of the University of Lowell, Dies at Age 82

BY JACK MCDONOUGH

**“HE WAS THE PERFECT LEADER FOR THE TIMES. HIS CONTRIBUTIONS WERE GREAT, NOT ONLY TO THE UNIVERSITY BUT ALSO THE CITY AND THE NATIONAL PARK.”**

— Chancellor Marty Meehan

“He came from nothing,” his daughter says. “He was born in the Depression. His father was a milkman. It was a pretty rough upbringing.”

But, despite the humble origins, she says, “My dad was a trailblazer, a man of letters with a wry wit and a soft heart. He was a remarkable guy. He had the confidence to say, ‘Yes, I can be president of a university.’”

And that’s what he became.

Daughter Maureen was talking about her dad, John Duff, who in 1975 was named the first president of the University of Lowell.

John Duff had come a long way from South Orange, N.J., where he was born in 1931, the oldest of four brothers. Their father was John Sr., the milkman, and their mother was the former Mary Cunningham who, at the age of 18, had emigrated alone from Galway, Ireland.

Young John’s odyssey wound from Our Lady of the Valley High School in Orange to the Bronx, N.Y., where he earned a bachelor’s degree at Fordham University. Then it was back to South Orange for a master’s degree from Seton Hall University and then back again to New York City for a doctorate from Columbia University.

Before completing his doctorate, Duff joined the history faculty at Seton Hall and, in 1970, as Dr. Duff, he was named the university’s vice president for Academic Affairs. Three years later he became the first lay provost and executive vice president in the history of Seton Hall.

Meanwhile, in Massachusetts, a special commission was appointed in 1972 to consider the merger of Lowell State College and Lowell Technological Institute into a single university—an idea that had been considered and debated for more than a decade. In January 1973 legislation was filed to create the University of Lowell.

More than 150 educators from around the country applied for the job of president of the new university. The first board of trustees, sworn into office by Gov. Michael Dukakis in 1975, whittled the list down to a final three.

In the end, by unanimous vote, the board chose Seton Hall Provost John B. Duff to lead the newly established University of Lowell. He took office on April 1, 1976.

From the very beginning, Duff insisted that the two campuses—North and South—be considered as one and that the University become an integral part of the Lowell community. He helped shape the image of the University as a part of the community—focusing on culture, education and health.

Leading the outreach efforts, Duff became chairman of the Lowell Historic Preservation Commission and oversaw development of the Lowell National Historical Park. And, when the Merrimack Repertory Theater was founded in 1979, he offered the group its first space.

He was a busy guy.

Larry Martin, the University’s former dean of Admissions, says, “After he was here, we went from one society event to the next. You had to buy a tux because you’d go broke renting one. There were a lot of black-tie affairs, a lot of city-wide type events.”

His accomplishments were clearly evident on campus, too.

Under his presidency, the University increased its budget, enrollment and research grant awards and added faculty. The Continuing Education program also was greatly expanded, offering not only technical courses but programs in sociology, psychology, English and other liberal arts disciplines.

In 1981, Duff requested a two-year leave of absence to become the first chancellor of the Massachusetts higher education system, a post in which he served until 1986. He officially resigned the University presidency in January 1983.

And still he was not done.

After leaving the state education post in Massachusetts, he became the first non-librarian appointed commissioner of the Chicago public library system. In that post, he supervised the construction of the Harold Washington Library, the world’s largest public library.

In 1992, Duff became president of Columbia College in Chicago, where he oversaw the acquisition of the college’s first modern residence hall and led long-range planning and expansion efforts.

A pre-eminent Civil War scholar, he also was the author of several books, including “The Irish in the United States,” “The Structure of American History,” and “Slavery: Its Origins and Legacy.”

John Duff and his first wife, Helen, were married for 33 years and had three sons and three daughters. He was later married for 25 years to Estelle Shanley.

Duff died in Palm Desert, Calif., on Oct. 1 after a period of failing health. He was 82.

Chancellor Marty Meehan, who as a student had worked closely with President Duff, said, “He was the perfect leader for the times. His contributions were great, not only to the University but also the city and the national park.” ■

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Learning with Purpose







California Dreaming

- [1] Alumni in San Francisco enjoy a special evening at the Golden Gate Yacht Club.
- [2] Alumni reconnect and learn about the progress at UMass Lowell at an exquisite brunch at Shutters on the Beach in Santa Monica. From left: Director of Alumni Relations Heather Makrez '06, '08; Ed Yang '76; Vice Chancellor Ed Chiu; Suzanne '65 and Walter McHendry '64.
- [3] Alumni gather for a beautiful day and a Red Sox win at the Dodgers' home field. Front row, from left: Mark De Angelis '87, Kim Yap '88, Kayla Yap and Abe Yap. Back Row, from left: Joe Gandolfo '66, '01 (H) and Associate Vice Chancellor John Davis.
- [4] Alumni spend the afternoon together in California Wine Country and enjoy an evening reception at the home of Mark Eastham '78. From left: Ned Barrett '58; John Davis, associate vice chancellor; Debra and Brian Scappaticci '79; Heather Makrez '06, '08, director of alumni relations; Bob Ward '71, '12 (H) and Carole Barrett.



On the Links

- [1] The annual Boutin-Stone Golf Tournament was held as a celebration of the past, present and future of UMass Lowell Baseball. Pictured here are Hall of Fame Coach Jim Stone and Mrs. Fleurette Boutin.
- [2] Sig-O fraternity alumni, students and corporate sponsors play a round of golf as a fundraiser to benefit the fraternity in their third annual tournament. From left: Mike Dolan '10, Dom Leggeri, Scott Laramie '09 and Eric Flower.
- [3] Jim Dandeneau '80, left and Deb Dandeneau enjoy a beautiful sunny day with golf partners Executive Vice Chancellor Jacqueline Moloney '75, '92 and Edward Moloney. Proceeds from the 4th Annual Plastics Engineering Golf Tournament benefit the Plastics Engineering Department.



River Hawks on the Road

- [1] Plastics Engineering alumni and students, sponsored by Princeton Tec, compete in a 210-mile Reach the Beach relay race to Hampton Beach, N.H. From left: Melissa Egan '03, '07, '13; Chair of Plastics Engineering Bob Malloy '79, '83, '88; Cristina Emphasis '03, '10; Gabriel Mendible '15; Amber Zapatka '11; Robert Duncan '13; Greg Pigeon '12; Jim Biggins '03; Bill Siopes '04; Douglas Malloy '13; Melissa Siopes '03 and Nick Illsley '12.
- [2] Dean Joseph Hartman of the Francis College of Engineering, back row, far left, and Executive Director of Special Initiatives Mark Reimer, back row, sixth from left, join co-host Chialoo Louis Shih '72, front row right, and fellow alumni for dinner in Hong Kong on their trip to Asia.
- [3] Dean Joseph Hartman of the Francis College of Engineering (center, rear) and Executive Director of Special Initiatives Mark Reimer (second from right) meet alumni from around the world at the K Show in Dusseldorf, Germany.
- [4] Alumni enjoying a summer road trip to Tanglewood are Betty Athanasoulas, left, and Athena Letsou '58.
- [5] Alumni and guests enjoy a sunset gathering in Brewster for the second Annual Cape Cod Alumni & Friends Summer Event. From left: Peter FitzPatrick, Roberta Lang, Ed Bonacci '54 and Linda FitzPatrick '68.
- [6] Members of the New York Alumni Network visit with Athletic Director Dana Skinner at a reception before the men's basketball team played Columbia University.







## Bringing the Festive to the Fall

A record crowd of alumni, students, faculty, staff—and their friends and family members—attended our annual Fall Festival in October. The three-day homecoming weekend was packed with fun events—from homecoming to family day to reunions—designed to help alumni reconnect and make new memories.

We honored our most generous benefactors at the Celebration of Philanthropy and cheered on our Hockey East champs at the River Hawks home opener. We celebrated the season at an Oktoberfest party and remembered the friends we've lost at the Annual Jennifer's 5K Fun Run/Walk.

**We look forward to seeing even more alumni on campus in October 2014!**

[1] Softball Hall of Famer Kristine (Botto) Drust '02, right, and fellow softball alumnae gather to celebrate the newest member of the UMass Lowell Athletic Hall of Fame, Kristin (Mahoney) Farrell '07, '09, left, at the annual softball alumni game at Fall Festival.

[2] Proud UMass Lowell Lacrosse alumni join Head Coach Ed Stephenson at the newly renovated Cushing Field Complex to celebrate the reintroduction of lacrosse to the UMass Lowell athletic landscape with an alumni game during Fall Festival.

[3] Honorees: Executive Vice Chancellor Jacqueline Moloney '75, '92 and Chancellor Marty Meehan '78 visit with honorees at the annual Chancellor's Leadership Society Dinner. First row: Meehan, Nancy Donahue '13 (H), Richard Donahue '91 (H), Mary Jo '66 and Francis '66 Spinola. Back row: Luis Pedrosa, Moloney, Abha '88 & Anil Singhal, Lorenzo Cabrera '94, Carole and Edward '58 Barrett.

[4] Assistant Athletic Director for Advancement Ted Priestly hands silent auction winner Ellen Doucette her prize—a basketball signed by Celtics legend Larry Bird—at the third annual UMass Lowell Women's Basketball "Chalk Talk" fundraiser. All proceeds from the evening benefited UMass Lowell Women's Basketball.

[5] Alumni, friends and students gather for a reception and networking presentation hosted by the Black Alumni Network during Fall Festival weekend. From left: Weeldens Louise '14, Assistant Director of Alumni Relations Reja Gamble and keynote speaker Samuel Divine '98, CEO of Cross Atlantic Business Advisors, LLC.

[6] Patrick '86 and Gia Buckley '90 enjoy a special evening at the third annual Greek Life Gala reunion.

[7] Agnes (McLean) Carolan '53, left, Ann (Regan) Sousa '53 and Michael Sousa immerse themselves in photos and reminisce about their college years during the annual Golden Alumni Luncheon.

[8] Scholarship donor Charlie Hoff '66, '04 (H) chats with scholarship recipients, from left, Ghazal Kayal '14, Constance Tolmaire '15, and Student Alumni Ambassador Oti Achamfour '14 at the annual Celebration of Philanthropy Scholarship Luncheon.

[9] Parents join in the Fall Festival celebration at a party before the hockey game. From left: Regina Fitzpatrick, son Kenny Rogers '17 and Tom Fitzpatrick.

[10] Alumni, Student Affairs staff and students mingle and reconnect at the fifth Annual Student Leadership Alumni Reunion held at the Tsongas Center at UMass Lowell Talon Club before cheering on the River Hawks to a victory against UMass Amherst. From left: Student Ambassador Keval Bhagat '15, Student Trustee Phillip Geoffroy '15, President of Student Government Andrew Ladd '15 and Brian Dano '13.





On and Around Campus

- [1] The Saab-Pedroso Center for Portuguese Studies and Culture hosts “Sounds of Portugal.” From left: Luis Pedroso, Fado singer Rodrigo Costa Félix; Elisia ’13(H) and Mark Saab ’81, ’13(H) and Dean of Fine Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences Luis Falcón.
- [2] Learning in Retirement Association members celebrated their 25th Anniversary and the signing of a formal Memorandum of Understanding with the University. The quilt in the background was designed and made by LIRA members. From left: Dotty Morris, Suzanne Knapp (one of the quilters), Connie Lanseigne-Case ’53, Toby (Koffman) Hodes ’58 and Betty Sampas.
- [3] Faculty and staff gather at the start of the semester to celebrate the growth of the Commonwealth Honors Program. From left: Faculty award recipient Todd Avery; Honors Founders Eric Sheldon and Executive Vice Chancellor Jacqueline Moloney ’75, ’92; student award recipient Seda Babroudi ’14 and Chancellor Marty Meehan ’78.
- [4] Terrorism Panel: From left: Former National Security Council Deputy for Counterterrorism Roger Cressey ’87; Deputy Director of the National Counter Terrorism Center Nicholas J. Rasmussen; FBI Boston Division Special Agent in Charge Vincent B. Lisi and Massachusetts Secretary of Public Safety Andrea J. Cabral participate in a practitioners’ panel at the launch of the University’s Center for Terrorism and Security Studies.
- [5] Chancellor Marty Meehan ’78, Student Alumni Ambassadors (SAA), family, friends, faculty and staff celebrate the induction of the 2013-2014 class of SAA members at the second Annual Student Alumni Ambassador Pinning Ceremony.
- [6] Nora Smith, granddaughter of Executive Vice Chancellor Jacqueline Moloney ’75, ’92, gets a hug from Rowdy the River Hawk at the Tsongas Center.

Then...



Students play bridge in the lounge of Eames Hall in 1957. Eames was the second dormitory built on campus after Smith Hall, both of which were part of President Kenneth Fox’s plan to expand the campus to address the surge of student veterans who enrolled following World War II. The Eames lounge was a popular between-classes haven for students. Let us know if you lived in Eames Hall! Email [alumni\\_office@uml.edu](mailto:alumni_office@uml.edu) and share a memory.





*Now...*

*There are two huge lounges and kitchens on every floor of our state-of-the-art University Suites residence hall, which opened for the fall semester. Comprised mostly of four- and six-person suites, the building also has a large common lounge and eatery on the first floor. U-Suites was built in response to the demand for student housing: Enrollment at UMass Lowell has risen 46 percent since 2007, to nearly 17,000 undergraduate and graduate students.*





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# Hawk Hatch

**Bringing New Ideas to Life**

**Now Hatching at UMass Lowell**

**INNOVATION, IDEAS AND CREATIVITY**

**HAWK HATCH** is a fundraising initiative geared to helping students “hatch” their projects. Whether they are launching a smartphone application, producing prosthetic arms, making concrete float, constructing a steel bridge to carry 2,500 pounds, building a medical warehouse in Haiti or bringing diversity to nursing, the support from believers like you will help these students soar higher and achieve greater.

To see what projects are currently in the Hawk Hatch nest, please visit [www.uml.edu/hawkhatch](http://www.uml.edu/hawkhatch) and consider supporting a student project.