

UMass Dartmouth Leduc Center for Civic Engagement partners with Jumpstart for Young Children

The student-led program will support youth language, literacy, and social-emotional development.

The Leduc Center at UMass Dartmouth has recently started a Jumpstart for Young Children (Jumpstart) program that will pair 30 UMass Dartmouth students as tutors and mentors with 100 Pre-K children at People Acting in Community Endeavors (PACE) Head Start in New Bedford. The program, typically delivered in person, is scheduled to begin virtually this fall.

Jumpstart—a national early education organization—believes that all children have the potential to succeed. Jumpstart's work advances equitable learning outcomes for young children in underserved communities through a combination of high-quality programming, advocacy, and leadership.

"In the face of COVID-19 and extended out-of-school time," said Jumpstart CEO Naila Bolus, "Jumpstart is proud to be able to partner with UMass Dartmouth to support local children and communities hit hardest by gaps in access to critical early learning opportunities."

Teams of 5-7 Jumpstart Corps Members will spend between 200 and 300 hours during the school year with PACE Head Start, ensuring children develop key kindergarten readiness skills. Jumpstart Corps Members reduce the student-to-teacher ratio to 3:1 in every Jumpstart classroom, allowing children to receive an individualized learning experience and develop nurturing relationships with caring adults.

"I am excited that UMass Dartmouth is continuing to partner with regional organizations to strengthen the economic, cultural, and most importantly, educational aspirations of the SouthCoast," said UMass Dartmouth Acting Chancellor Mark Preble. "With Jumpstart, our students are learning valuable skills for their future while making a difference in the lives of young children in the region."

"Jumpstart is a great resource for PACE's Head Start program. For many months, we have been unable to have any volunteers work with our programs due to COVID-19. This program allows these dedicated volunteers an opportunity to virtually contribute to the success of our students during this time and beyond," said Pam Kuechler, Executive Director of PACE, Inc., a private, non-profit, community based, anti-poverty agency serving the Greater New Bedford area.

Jumpstart Corps Members receive up to sixty hours of high-quality pre-service training and ongoing coaching. In a typical year, Jumpstart's trainings help college students develop key workforce readiness skills, such as leadership, time management, and teamwork. Trainings also focus on early education topics, such as early language development, positive classroom management, and impactful adult-child interactions, as well as successful program implementation.

Each element of Jumpstart's program and evidence-based curriculum is intentionally designed to meet the needs of the community being served.

Jumpstart monitors a child's progress towards kindergarten readiness throughout their participation and uses the data to continuously improve the program. On average, 90% of Jumpstart children make gains in the language and literacy skills determined to be predictors of kindergarten readiness and school success. Many Corps Members also choose to pursue a career in teaching after Jumpstart, allowing more experienced and passionate teachers to enter the field.

Faculty member of Greater New Bedford Voc-Tech tests positive for COVID-19

Yesterday, the day after Gomes Elementary school reported a staff member testing positive for COVID-19, Greater New Bedford Voc-Tech reported one of their staff member tested positive. The following letter was sent out by James L. O'Brien, the Superintendent-Director Greater New Bedford Voc-Tech:

"Dear Parents,

I am writing to inform you that a member of the faculty at Greater New Bedford Voc-Tech tested positive for COVID 19 and is now home self-isolating.

This individual did not have contact with any students. However, several co-workers who have been in close contact with the infected employee are now also self-isolating as well and will be tested for COVID-19, we anticipate having the results of those tests tomorrow. Those co-workers have not shown any symptoms of COVID-19 at this time. However, based on the results of COVID-19 testing anticipated tomorrow, we may need to take other steps to isolate this situation.

Protocols from the Centers for Disease Control, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Department of Health are guiding our response to this situation, and we will continue to rely on that guidance throughout this pandemic.

I will continue to update you as developments warrant with

regard to this situation and how they may impact your child, if at all. Please be assured that the health and safety of our students, faculty, and staff is our number one priority. This school year is going to be one where we are faced with continuing challenges as a result of COVID-19, and we will be required to respond to those challenges with little warning.

This may be the first incident, but may well not be the last and I thank you all for your support of our school, each other and for your patience.”

Regards,

James L. O’Brien

Superintendent-Director

Dartmouth Police Department would like to remind the students about a few of the new “rules”

“With the school year finally upon us, Chief Levesque and the members of DPD would like to remind the students of Dartmouth about a few of the new rules:

* No running in the hallway, as you might trip over your cat or dog.

* No eating or drinking in the classroom, as your father just shampooed the rugs last week.

* Making some silly TikTok video that absolutely NO ONE over 40 will understand, will not count as credit towards your A/V

project.

* Treat the lunch lady with the utmost respect, because not only is she going to be cooking for you for several more years to come, but we have also heard that she can get a bit crazy if pushed hard enough.

* Comfort animals are only allowed in the classroom if you can promise that they won't hop onto your keyboard and expose their kibbles and bits to the rest of the class.

* Make sure that you put pants on before getting up from your desk.

* Lastly, do not congregate outside of the classroom, as your mother and/or father might need to squeeze by, and their patience is already worn thin enough with you because you've been home with them since March!

Have a great school year everyone.

Please stay safe and healthy!

PLEASE SHARE" -Dartmouth Police Department.

Working from home....



New Bedford High School Evening Extension registration now underway for the fall 2020 Trimester

New Bedford High School Evening Extension Program is now conducting registration by appointment for the fall 2020 trimester. Call 508-997-4511, ext. 33550 Monday through Friday, between 8:00 a.m. and 3:15 p.m. or, 508-997-4511, ext. 2304 Monday and Wednesday between 5:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. to schedule an appointment or for additional information. Class seating is limited. Late registrations accepted through September 23, 2020.

If you are new to the program and want to earn a New Bedford High School Evening Extension credential, please bring an official high school transcript and your MCAS scores to your appointment.

For more information, visit the NBHS Evening Extension webpage: <http://adulted.newbedfordschools.org/>

Massachusetts school restart

triggering range of emotions among students

By Katie Lannan

State House News Service

With peers who sometimes lack access to masks and hand sanitizer, classrooms that don't always have windows, and a city whose COVID-19 case rate is the highest in the state, Chelsea High School student Victoria Stutto said she would not feel safe going back to school in-person at all this year.

Chelsea's schools are starting the academic year with full remote instruction. Stutto, 17, said she hopes to see changes from what she experienced in the spring, when she found learning from home "next to impossible."

Stutto, speaking on a Zoom call hosted by the Massachusetts Education Justice Alliance, said her father died about a month after her school and others across the state suddenly transitioned to remote learning as the pandemic took hold.

She said only some of the teachers were understanding of the challenges she faced, and the process as a whole was disorganized.

"I couldn't focus on any of the lessons, and the dysfunctionality of it all, I just couldn't balance it with my everyday life," Stutto said.

Stutto and others who spoke during the virtual press conference illustrated the tension facing many students, teachers, and families across the state as the back-to-school season arrives. While wary about the health implications of a physical return to the classroom, parents and students on the call also outlined concerns with remote schooling, including difficulty connecting with teachers, technology problems and

social isolation.

Stutto and another rising senior in Chelsea, Katy Ochoa, said that schools should look at each student's individual situation and suggested they name a point person kids could reach out to with their personal needs and problems around remote learning.

Araceli Flores, a 16-year-old Everett High School student, said her mom, who has a medical condition, is worried about her risk of contracting COVID-19 if Flores and her younger sister were to go back to school in-person. Flores said she, too, wonders how students would be able to feel safe.

But, Flores said, she felt "like we didn't learn anything" this past spring, and her sister, a fourth grader, told her "that going to school, she would learn better."

Gov. Charlie Baker has advocated for schools to resume at least some in-person education in communities where the risk of COVID-19 transmission is low, pointing to the social and emotional needs of students who have been out of the classroom for almost six months and the difficulties inherent with teaching things like reading from a distance.

The administration rolled out a series of safety protocols that districts must adhere to if they do repopulate classrooms, including mask-wearing, social distancing and sanitation measures. The choice to pursue in-person schooling, remote education or a hybrid model fell to individual districts.

Baker announced Thursday that the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is launching a public awareness campaign highlighting what steps are being taken to reopen schools safely. A new website aims to answer families' questions and features a video of doctors discussing the status of COVID-19 in Massachusetts.

“Over the summer, the Department worked with many stakeholders and medical experts to carefully develop detailed guidance to reopen schools safely, and superintendents, teachers and staff worked hard to implement those health and safety requirements,” Elementary and Secondary Education Commissioner Jeffrey Riley said in a statement. “We now need to rely on families, students and the other members of the public to do their part to prevent the spread of COVID-19 so that our kids can get back to school.”

In Boston, the city’s schools are starting remotely on Sept. 21. Later in the fall, families will be given the option to have their students gradually return for some in-person instruction, in a hybrid model, if public health metrics hold.

Janina Rackard plans to keep Jay’dha, her 12-year-old daughter, at home. Rackard said she thinks more thought needs to be put into safety precautions and that the coronavirus “is just not contained.”

“I am not going to let my daughter be that subject, that test subject,” she said.

Another Boston parent, Suleika Soto, said she was choosing a hybrid model for her children, ages 9 and 12. She’s still afraid of the unknown and wants clearer communication from the school district, she said, but needs to return to work.

“There is no real child care out there, so school’s my next best option,” she said. “I know this is high risk, but I’m kind of stuck.”

Soto said she’d feel “more secure” about sending her kids back to school if COVID-19 testing were mandatory.

“I know that flu shots are going to be required from what I hear, I know physicals are required, so why not put a COVID test in, as some sort of requirement for going back into the buildings?” she said.

UMass Dartmouth Academic Resource Center awarded \$2.35M grant

The highly competitive grant helps provide support services to students pursuing business and STEM studies.

UMass Dartmouth's Academic Resource Center (ARC) has received a \$2.35 million TRiO grant to help provide support services to students who meet certain criteria, including students enrolled in business courses and STEM-specific programs and eligible students who are Pell Grant recipients. The five-year grant will help provide support services to students of underrepresented populations as well as students who identify as first-generation, low-income, or disabled.

"The Academic Resource Center strives to provide excellent tutorial and academic support services, including academic counseling, advising, and tutoring, to students enrolled at UMass Dartmouth," says Carol Spencer-Monteiro, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Success.

The ARC is one of three student-centric programs among 22 that received funding in Massachusetts and attained a perfect score in the current grant competition. Last academic year, the Center – through its Outreach Counselor services and STEM Learning Lab as well as the Writing & Reading Center – received nearly 8,000 visits and supported more than 1,400 students. Nearly 70 percent of those students were Asian, Black, or Hispanic or students of other underrepresented populations.

John Fernandes, director of the STEM Learning Lab, says "In

addition to helping students in their classes, tutors often improve their GPAs through their constant review of course materials, thus helping them to maintain a firm understanding of the foundation material necessary to succeed in all their upper-level courses and prepare for graduate studies and employment.” Financially, students also benefit through the ARC’s Grant Aid Award, a \$900 Pell supplement awarded to 60 students every year.

Since 1975, the ARC has successfully garnered funding for TRIO Student Support Services, making it the sixth-largest grant UMass Dartmouth has received to enhance students’ academic success. This five-year grant from the Federal Department of Education for the Student Support Services Program helps students to succeed and increase retention, persistence, graduate rates, employment, and/or enrollment in graduate studies. The University also supplies funds to the ARC for tutorial support for business and STEM students.

Bristol Community College celebrates High School Equivalency graduates with a virtual ceremony

Bristol Community College celebrated its 2020 High School Equivalency (HSE) graduates with a virtual ceremony on Tuesday, August 25, 2020, at 6 p.m., on Bristol’s Adult Education Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/bristolccadulthoodeducation> and webpage, www.bristolcc.edu/adulthoodeducation. Recipients were recognized

for their dedication to successfully completing Bristol's HSE classes and state-wide examination credential or for completing the rigorous exam at the college's testing center.

"We know that Adult Education High School Equivalency graduates are some of the most resilient and hardworking, as they have successfully managed work, family and several other life responsibilities while working toward this important credential," said Laura L. Douglas, Ph.D., President, Bristol Community College. "We applaud the commitment and the personal dedication it took to achieve this educational milestone that will serve graduates well on their career path."

Bristol Community College's complete 2020 High School Equivalency Graduation Ceremony can be viewed here: <https://youtu.be/GphCwGXayvQ>.

The virtual celebration was facilitated by Bristol Community College Director of Adult Education Nancy Labonte and included a congratulatory note from Bristol Community College President Laura L. Douglas. The 2019-20 recipient of the Diane McMullen Scholarship was announced by the McMullen family to HSE student Christine Williams, who has shown leadership through community service and will continue her education at Bristol Community College.

"We are proud to celebrate the achievements of our dedicated and hard-working HSE students," said Nancy Labonte, Director, Adult Education. "From here, students are able to further their education or secure careers that provide better opportunities for themselves and their families."

Bristol HSE instructor Carol Ginsberg presented the names of year's 84 HSE graduates, whose achievements were celebrated alongside graduates' families, friends and the Bristol community.

In Massachusetts, the High School Equivalency (HSE) tests (which include both the GED and HiSet) provide a state-issued,

alternative credential to a high school diploma. The HSE high school-equivalency diploma is essential for a student's pathway to obtain a college degree, training programs, military careers and employment opportunities.

The college has annually honored the achievements of its high school equivalency graduates for the past 35 years with an in-person ceremony, celebrating the hard-earned credential with the recipients. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, Bristol safely continued the event in the form of a live virtual ceremony, which was recorded for viewing on-demand.

Bristol's High School Equivalency (HSE) classes are competency-based, allowing students to finish classes and take tests when they are ready. Classes are currently available online.

For more information on Adult Education programming, please visit www.bristolcc.edu/adulteducation or contact Nicola Machado by email at nicola.machado@bristolcc.edu or call 774.357.2270.

Azorean Maritime Heritage Society awards scholarships to six Greater New Bedford students

The Azorean Maritime Heritage Society has awarded \$8,000 in scholarships to six Greater New Bedford students.

The scholarships were presented by our Scholarship Committee

on August 20th at Prince Henry the Navigator Park on Pope's Island in New Bedford.

This year's scholarship winners:

- Cameron Curado, graduate of Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical High School, is the recipient of our \$1,500 Dr. Mary T. Vermette Memorial Scholarship. He will be attending Johnson & Wales University to study Culinary Arts and Food & Beverage Management.
- Gwendolyn Baptista, graduate of Old Rochester Regional Vocational Technical High School, plans to attend UMass Amherst to major in Architectural Design. She received our \$1,000 Faial Scholarship.
- Savanha Laroche, graduate of B.M.C. Durfee High School, plans to attend UMass Dartmouth to major in Nursing. She received our \$1,000 Pico Scholarship.
- Christina Eckenreiter, graduate of Fairhaven High School, will be attending UMass Amherst to study Animal Science. She received our \$1,000 Bela Vista Scholarship.
- Phoenix Carreiro, graduate of Bishop Stang High School, plans to attend Suffolk University to study Global Business. She is the recipient of our \$1,000 scholarship in memory of Bernice Mae Dutra Georgadarellis.
- Jillian Aguiar, graduate of Bishop Stang High School, is the recipient of this year's \$2,500 Rosa Pinheiro Memorial Scholarship. She plans to attend Sacred Heart University to study Biology in the Pre-Physician Assistant/Nursing Program.

Many of the funds for these scholarships come from an Annual Scholarship fundraising dinner dance held every February. The annual fundraising dinner is a fun way to support these scholarships, meet new people, and enjoy a night out with friends.

The Scholarship Committee, led by Chairperson Barbara Traban, includes Gloria Gundersen, Dyan Kieltyka, Paul Georgadarellis, Larry Almeida, Lucilia Amaral, and Celeste LeBoeuf.



Azorean Maritime Heritage Society photo.



Azorean Maritime Heritage Society photo.

The Azorean Maritime Heritage Society promotes Azorean culture and shared whaling heritage by raising awareness and pride within New England's Portuguese-American community. The Society participated in the 10th International Azorean Whaleboat Regatta last July in the Azores, and plans to host the 11th International Regatta in New Bedford in 2021. The community is invited to come out for a free row or sail on these magnificent boats in Clarks Cove this September. More information can be found on the Society's website at www.azoreanmaritime.org.

Bristol Community College hosts most unique Commencement Ceremony in Bristol's history

Perseverance was the theme at Bristol Community College's 53rd Virtual Commencement Ceremony held on Friday, August 21, 2020, at 5:30 p.m., on Bristol's 2020 Commencement website, Facebook and YouTube pages.

Bristol Community College's 53rd Commencement Ceremony, originally scheduled for Saturday, May 30, 2020, was postponed due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. The reimagined virtual commencement ceremony featured many of the same elements of the traditional, in-person commencement, including recognizing graduates from each Bristol location by name and honoring distinguished community members. Offering the unique ceremony online also provided the opportunity for friends and family from all around the world to participate in the

celebration, in real-time, while keeping everyone safe and healthy.

“So many of our students have long balanced the responsibilities of pursuing an education while caring for loved ones, holding multiple jobs and triumphing over obstacles. The COVID-19 pandemic quickly amplified these challenges and Bristol’s proud graduates were able to persevere. It requires creativity, resilience and compassion to navigate life’s obstacles, find balance and remain focused,” said Laura L. Douglas, President, Bristol Community College. “The strength and determination Bristol’s graduates have demonstrated has brought them to where they are today and will take them wherever they want to go.”

As one of the largest community college graduating classes in Massachusetts, Bristol Community College awarded approximately 1,200 degrees and certificates, including degrees in Associate in Science, Associate in Arts, and Associate in Applied Science. Certificates of achievement were also awarded. Academic achievement with cum laude, magna cum laude and summa cum laude designations were recognized.

Bristol Community College’s complete 2020 Virtual Commencement Ceremony can be viewed here: <https://youtu.be/YdiRFE6DmMM>.

Over the last few months, Bristol has been working hard to determine the best and safest way to celebrate our graduates and student success. While the college hoped to hold an in-person ceremony, as the pandemic continues to evolve, the college knew that safely hosting our Commencement Ceremony – of typically more than 3,000 guests – was not possible in the coming months. More than 250 students responded to a graduation survey and a virtual commencement was voted as the first choice for many students – more than the other options presented. The college also welcomed 2020 Bristol graduates wishing to walk across the stage and be celebrated in person, the option to attend the college’s 2021 Commencement Ceremony.

Leading up to the Commencement Ceremony, the college has shared student stories of perseverance and commitment. Bristol is celebrating the 2020 graduates with the college's virtual Class of 2020 Yearbook and a care package was mailed to Bristol's graduates containing a diploma cover, graduation tassel, keepsake program book, Bristol Alumni pin and decal.

In keeping with tradition, the following prestigious awards were presented during Bristol's 2020 Virtual Commencement Ceremony:

CLASS OF 2020 VALEDICTORIAN AND SALUTATORIAN



2020 Bristol Community College Valedictorian Viviane M. Goese. This year's Valedictorian is Viviane M. Goese, of Swansea, Associate in Arts in liberal arts & sciences (humanities transfer); and the Salutatorian is Ethan Mort, of Mattapoisett, Associate in Arts in liberal arts & sciences (behavioral and social sciences transfer).

Viviane M. Goese began her journey at Bristol as an English as a Second Language (ESL) adult learner. During her time at

Bristol, she gracefully balanced her responsibilities of caring for her family while pursuing the opportunity she had once not thought possible – to earn a college degree. In addition to her outstanding academic achievements, she has positively contributed to the college community in her service as a tutor and a role model for others.

She credits the support and encouragement of her instructors for her successful transition from the college's ESL program to college courses and being asked to serve as a tutor. As a tutor for Bristol's Quest program supporting first-generation, low-income students and/or students with disabilities, she strengthened her own confidence and academic development.

She challenged herself and excelled as a member of Bristol's Commonwealth Honors Program and was appointed as a supplemental instructor in the college's Dual Enrollment Program, assisting in the education and professional development of high school students simultaneously earning high school and college credits. She also served Bristol as a tireless volunteer and advocate for the college's Holocaust and Genocide Center's initiatives and events.

She was recently accepted at Brown University, in Providence, R.I., in the Resumed Undergraduate Education (RUE) Program, where she aims to pursue the open curriculum offered by the institution. Through its multidisciplinary approach, she aims to achieve her intellectual ambitions while pursuing her goal of becoming an educator.

Ethan Mort developed his academic foundation and inspiration while earning his associate in liberal arts at Bristol before transferring to George Washington University (GWU), in Washington D.C., in Spring 2020.

In addition to his outstanding academic record, Ethan enhanced his experience at Bristol by becoming active in the college community and participating in ongoing lecture series for

students. He served as an active member of the college's Seeds of Sustainability Club, advocating and educating communities toward sustainable lifestyles as well as the Chief Organizer of the Bristol Climate Day of Active Education. The college-wide event promoted and raised awareness of the issues of climate change and carbon drawdown.

He attributes the support of his hard-working family and the college's dedicated faculty members to his academic achievements and preparation for success at a four-year institution.

Ethan is pursuing a major in political science and a double minor in history and international relations at GWU, where he participates on the GWU Parliamentary Debate Team. He plans to pursue a career in the political field in a position he feels can create change.

DISTINGUISHED CITIZEN AWARD

The Distinguished Citizen Award is presented annually to an outstanding local citizen whose character and achievements have enriched the life of the community, or to an individual who has made distinguished contributions in the fields of health, education, business, industry, labor, government or the arts.

This year, the Distinguished Citizen Award was presented to Joseph A. Marshall.

Joseph A. Marshall is the Founder and President of J. Marshall Associates, a financial planning firm in Fall River, and a dedicated member of the community whose contributions are highly regarded.

Upon return from his dedicated service in the United States Air Force, including a tour of duty in Vietnam, Joseph graduated from Bristol Community College in 1978, prior to transferring to the University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth,

where he earned his bachelor's degree.

He has held numerous leadership roles at Bristol throughout his devoted service to the college. Most recently, as Chair of the Board of Trustees following his service on the board since 2007. He is also the former President of the Bristol Community College Foundation. He is the recipient of Bristol's 2007 Cornerstone Entrepreneur Award and 2016 Paragon Award. In 2018, the college dedicated the new Joseph A. Marshall Veterans Center, on the Bristol Fall River campus, for Mr. Marshall's tireless advocacy for Bristol and student veterans.

Marshall is also a recognized community servant. He has served on several city boards and community groups, including the Fall River Office of Economic Development, the Board of Assessors, SER-Jobs for Progress, the Prince Henry Society of Fall River, and he currently serves as the Chair of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall Committee. He was recently named the recipient of BMC Durfee High School's Distinguished Alumnus award in 2020.

He is a life-long resident of Fall River with his wife, Joanne. They have four daughters and eight grandchildren.

HONORARY ASSOCIATE DEGREE IN HUMANE LETTERS

The Massachusetts Department of Higher Education has granted Bristol Community College the right to award honorary associate degrees in humane letters. The college awards these degrees to individuals who illustrate, through a career of intellect and service, the best of Bristol Community College's vision – to change the world, learner by learner.

This year's recipient was Margery Eagan.

Margery Eagan is the co-host of 89.7 WGBH's midday program Boston Public Radio, featuring smart and engaging conversations with leaders and thinkers shaping the Boston region. Subjects of her thought-provoking commentaries include

gender and women's issues, Catholicism and politics.

Margery has strong connections to the South Coast region. She grew up in Fall River and attended BMC Durfee High School before graduating from Stanford University, in Calif., where she earned her bachelor's degree in American studies.

She has written for her hometown newspaper, The Herald News, as well as for The Standard-Times of New Bedford. She has contributed to The Boston Globe, Burlington Vermont Free Press, Boston Magazine and The Boston Herald, where she was a columnist for 27 years. In 2015 and 2016, she earned national awards from the Religion Newswriters Association.

She currently lives in Brookline and has three grown children. She has a perfect attendance record at BMC Durfee High School reunions and two of her closest friends are high school classmates.

LAST LECTURE

The Last Lecture is a faculty honor created by the Bristol Community College Student Senate. The award honors one exemplary faculty member who has affected students' education and their lives in significant ways.

Melissa Cardelli, M.S. C.A.G.S., Coordinator of the Early Childhood Education Careers Certificate and Degree programs at Bristol Community College, was selected by students to deliver the Last Lecture at Bristol's 2020 Virtual Commencement Ceremony.

Since she joined the college in 2004, Melissa has been committed to working with the college and regional community to strengthen the early childhood education profession and to promote increased educational and professional opportunities for early childhood educators. In addition to strengthening her community and profession, she is recognized for her dedication to student success and support.

Melissa has over 20 years of experience in the field of early childhood education as a professor, early childhood educator, family childcare professional and program coordinator. She received her Bachelor of Arts in sociology (social services) from the University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth in Dartmouth; her Master of Science certificate and Master of Science in parent education and support from Wheelock College in Boston; and her Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study (C.A.G.S) in early childhood education from the American International College in Springfield. Melissa also serves as President of the Board of Directors for the Children's Museum of Greater Fall River.

She has been the recipient of several awards at the college including the Silver Shield Award in 2009, a National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development (NISOD) Award in 2012, as well as the President's Volunteer Service Award and Massachusetts Colleges Online Course of Distinction Award in 2014.

GRAND MARSHALL

Dr. Mary Zahm, Professor of Psychology at Bristol Community College, has been honored to serve as the Grand Marshall at Bristol's 2020 Virtual Commencement Ceremony. Continuing Bristol's tradition of awarding this honor to one of the college's longest-serving faculty or staff members, Dr. Zahm lead this year's graduates and proud viewers to the virtual commencement stage.

Dr. Zahm joined the college in 1994 in the college's psychology and sociology department and has served at the college as a dedicated associate professor and professor of psychology and formerly as the pioneering director of the college's Civic Engagement program. Prior to Bristol, she served as a Human Factors Engineer at the Raytheon Company in Portsmouth, R.I.

She received her Bachelor of Science in social and health services and Bachelor of Arts in psychology from Roger Williams University in Bristol, R.I.; her Master of Arts in personality and social psychology from Rhode Island College in Providence, R.I.; and her Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in experimental psychology from the University of Rhode Island in Kingston, R.I.

She has been the recipient of several awards at the college including the Silver Shield Award for Excellence in Teaching and Community Service in 1997, Inducted into the Sceptre and Scroll Society for exceptional college-wide service in 2001, the Phi Theta Kappa Recognition Award in 2008 as well as the Legacy Award for dedication and service to Bristol's Civic Engagement Program.

For more information about Bristol Community College's 2020 Virtual Commencement Ceremony, please visit <http://www.bristolcc.edu/commencement>.

UMass Law first-year student enrollment up more than 30 percent for fall 2020

Overall enrollment nearly doubled over past four years with academic stature soaring.

UMass Law begins its academic year today with 146 new students, a 30.4 percent increase over last year, bringing total enrollment of the Commonwealth's only public law school to 360 students.

At the same time, incoming student LSAT and undergraduate GPA medians set an institutional record, making this year's incoming class the most academically qualified in the history of the school.

"UMass law has a powerful national brand, a unique identity as the commonwealth's first and only public law school, and a critical public service mission that resonates with prospective students looking to make a difference in their communities," said UMass Dartmouth Chief Operating Officer and Acting Chancellor Mark Preble.

Before this record-setting class, UMass Law's enrollment growth over the past three years ranked third among the more than 200 ABA-accredited law schools in the country on a percentage basis.

"I think the reason for our growth is simple," said UMass Law Dean Eric Mitnick. "Students are looking to pass the bar exam and get a job without accumulating an inordinate amount of debt, and on each of those fronts, we deliver. We are both more affordable and we outperform in bar passage and employment outcomes."

UMass Law has seen dramatic performance increases among all key metrics:

- First-year enrollment – up 121%, from 66 in fall 2016 to 146 in fall 2020
- Overall enrollment – up 94%, from 186 in 2016 to 360 in 2020
- LSAT/Undergraduate GPA – record medians, making the incoming 2020 class the most qualified in the history of the school.
- Bar exam success – 82.6% of UMass Law first-time takers of the Massachusetts bar exam passed the test in July 2019, fifth-best among the nine Massachusetts law schools, and 80% passed in February 2020, third-best among the nine schools.

UMass Law's rapid improvement in its bar passage rate was recently highlighted in a national publication.

- Employment success – 85% of UMass Law's 2019 graduates secured employment or were pursuing further graduate degrees, with 60.9% in "gold standard" (full-time, long-term, bar-required) jobs, fifth highest among the nine law schools in Massachusetts and Rhode Island.
- Practical Training – UMass Law was ranked among the top law schools in the country for practical training by preLaw Magazine for the past two years in a row, placing 3rd in Massachusetts and 5th in New England in 2020.
- UMass Law ranks 1st among the fifteen law schools in New England over the past five years (2014-2019) for the percentage of graduates (27%) entering public service.

UMass Law continues to have one of the most diverse student bodies among New England law schools, with over 30 percent being students of color, including approximately one-third of the first-year students. In 2019, students of color made up 39 percent of UMass Law's graduating class, a higher percentage than any other law school in New England.

The entering students were born in 16 different countries and come from 31 different states with the largest cohort (43 percent) being Massachusetts residents. They graduated from 110 different colleges and range in age from 20 to 55 with an average age of 26.

Established in 2010, the UMass School of Law is one of seven colleges and schools of UMass Dartmouth. Its students, through the law school curriculum and outreach clinics, have provided more than 150,000 hours of pro bono legal assistance and related community service across the Commonwealth.

Besides holding its tuition to about half the price of private law schools, UMass Law has established 3+3 programs with 13

colleges across Massachusetts to further reduce the cost of law school. These programs allow students to apply credits earned during their first year of law school to their final year of college, saving students thousands of dollars in tuition payments. Partner colleges include Assumption College, Anna Maria College, Becker College, Fitchburg State University, Framingham State University, Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts, Regis College, Salem State University, UMass Boston, UMass Dartmouth, UMass Lowell, Westfield State University, and Worcester State University.

In addition, UMass Law and Bridgewater State University offer a joint Juris Doctor/Master of Social Work program that allows students to earn both degrees in four years rather than five. By collaborating on the program, the schools are enabling students to enter public service with a uniquely defined skill set and less student debt.