

UMass Dartmouth hosts student delegation from University of the Azores

Students presented their projects on international issues

The UMass Dartmouth Portuguese Department, Ferreira-Mendes Portuguese-American Archives, and School of Education in the UMass Dartmouth College of Arts & Sciences hosted a delegation of graduate Education students from the University of the Azores. The students were joined by their instructor Graça Castanha and the poet Manuela Bulcão. They offered a workshop entitled, "Teaching Portuguese through Universal Design for Learning and Happiness". The event, which took place on Friday, 21 February 2020 from 1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m., was held at the Ferreira-Mendes Portuguese-American Archives.

The workshop aimed at presenting two academic projects. The first project was "The People's Right to Happiness, a UN proposal." Castanha presented the proposal that these same students had made earlier in the week at the United Nations in New York. There they argued that Happiness should be added to the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Castanha then made the connection between Happiness and Education, which is already designated as a Universal Human Right.

The students then went on to present the second academic project, "Universal Design for Learning: Teaching Portuguese Worldwide". They spoke convincingly of the need to design courses that were both engaging and allowed for different learning styles. They demonstrated this technique in a variety of ways, the most memorable being engaging the audience of students, faculty and community members in the singing of "Chamarrita".

“I think this has been a wonderful opportunity for the students. They had the unique occasion to travel to New York to make a proposal to the United Nations. In the same trip, they then had the chance to present their work to their student counterparts at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth. This kind of meaningful dialogue is important for both the students and the institutions and should be welcomed,” said Shelley Pires, Consul of Portugal in New Bedford.

Todd Baptista's Doo Wop XVIII: The Hitmakers Returns to the Zeiterion on March 28th!

by Sean McCarthy

Todd Baptista knows what goes into an enjoyable evening of doo wop music. As the producer of dozens of doo wop concerts and the author of five books devoted to the musical genre, Baptista will once again enliven the stage of the Zeiterion Performing Arts Center with the sounds that gave birth to rock-and-roll, sounds that resonate with both the young and those who will enjoy revisiting their youth. There is a timelessness to doo wop music. The sounds that were embraced by the youth of the 1950's and early 1960's continue to be enjoyed by people of all ages, bolstered by the devoted fans of the genre as well as those who created it and continue to enjoy performing it. Grab your tickets **HERE**



Baptista will once again bring the sounds of some of doo wop's most classic artists with "Doo Wop XVIII: The Hitmakers," a concert that will feature the Flamingos, The Original Chantels, The Majors, and Kid Kyle – a two-and-a-half hour performance dedicated to the classic sounds of doo wop. The show will take to the stage of the Zeiterion on Saturday, March 28th with a 7:30 p.m. start. Tickets are \$45, \$49, and \$59, and can be purchased at zeiterion.org, by calling (508) 994-2900, or at the Zeiterion box office at 684 Purchase St. in downtown New Bedford.

But Baptista also knows that these evenings can include something special that goes beyond the performance – after the show the artists will be available in the lobby to meet with audience members, having conversations and signing autographs, an opportunity for fans to be up-close and personal with the people who have provided them with so many memories.

"This music was special to a lot of people when they were young, and it will always be special to them," Baptista says. "Popularity may change and they may not be on the top of the

charts anymore, but for the people who grew up listening to it that music is always in their heart. To relive that with the original artists and get a chance to meet them and see them face-to-face is unique and special. The artists enjoy it as much as the audience members."

And the acts that will be performing at the upcoming concert are some of doo wop's most prized performers. The headlining act, the **Flamingos**, are members of the Rock-and-Roll Hall of Fame, and they are also the subject of Baptista's most recent book, "The Flamingos: A Complete History of the Doo Wop Legends," which will be available at the show. The star of the Flamingos' performance will be Terry Johnson, who arranged and sang on the iconic 1959 hit "I Only Have Eyes For You," as well as writing and singing on the classic "Lovers Never Say Goodbye." His romantic tenor voice was also featured on hits such as "Mio Amore," and "Love Walked In," along with memorable ballads including "Golden Teardrops," and "I'll Be Home."

The Original Chantels will feature three original members and are known for favorites such as "Maybe" and "Look In My Eyes." The group scored 10 nationally-charting hit records beginning with "He's Gone" in 1957. **The Majors**, an act out of Philadelphia, will feature original bass vocalist Ron Gathers on hits such as "A Wonderful Dream," "She's A Troublemaker," and "Tra La La."



The evening will also include a high-energy performance by **Kid Kyle**, a 25-year old crooner who recently released his fifth album, "Can't Help Falling In Love." Kyle has spent more than half of his life on the concert stage and breathes new life into some of the classic hits of the early rock-and-roll era.



At the age of 52, Baptista is a New Bedford native who resides in Westport. He has produced 36 doo wop concerts beginning in 1998. He has been hosting shows at the Zeiterion since 2006.

"These shows are about giving flowers to the living, it's

about honoring the pioneers while they're here to perform it," Baptista says. "You can enjoy what they offer today. Sometimes I think about my dad during a performance. He's the one who introduced the music to me and kindled my passion. He's been gone for 15 years, but I still think about him enjoying the show and how he would react." "Life in our era was a lot simpler than it is today," says Louis Harris Powell of the Original Chantels.

"The music was something that could create memories and it was something you could definitely dance to. It made you feel happy. We didn't have electronics and we didn't have flashing lights, we'd just get up there and sing to our audience." "Music was a different animal in the 50s and 60s," Johnson says. "Music helped people fall in love, there was more communication. We didn't have cell phones and things like that, the words meant a lot, they were meaningful."

"I'm a lifelong fan of the music and the men and women who made it," Baptista says. "I build the show, produce the show, and host the show from the perspective of a devout fan. As a fan, I select and suggest songs for the sets and other parts of the presentation all from that perspective. When the audience really responds to an artist and that artist really takes it in and enjoys it, it's a mutual love affair and that feeling never gets old. It's magical."

"It always feels good to be on stage playing my music," Johnson says. "It feels the same way it did when I was 17. At the time I was just doing what I loved but eventually, songs were being used in movies and on television. Doo-wop has stayed alive decade after decade."

"What's interesting to me is that there are so many teenagers who know the music and sing it," Harris Powell says. "I can go online and punch in the name of a song and there will be high school kids singing the songs that we were singing back in the 50s. People are bringing their grandchildren and great-grandchildren to the shows and the kids know all the words to

the songs.”

“The fans are what’s most important, they keep us entertainers alive,” Johnson says. “They make us feel like we have a purpose. I always love the chance to meet with the fans.”

“For all of us musicians it’s unimaginable that we’re still singing after all these years,” Harris Powell says. “We get the audience’s energy – it makes us feel good. The fans help us to do what we do. It’s a beautiful thing to sing these songs that meant so much to people.”

“Quality lasts and great music will endure,” Baptista says. “People enjoy the simplicity of the songs, the message of love as opposed to hate and controversy and the beauty of the harmonies. Doo wop represents a simpler time, a more innocent time, one that people – not just the folks who lived through it – would like to experience again.”

Get tickets here: <https://zeiterion.org/doo-wop-hitmakers/>



New Massachusetts Bill To Legalize Pro and College Sports Betting Advances

By Colin A. Young, State House News Service

Adults in Massachusetts would be able to bet on professional and Division I college sports in person and through web or mobile apps under legislation released Friday by a legislative panel that's been studying sports betting for a year.

The Massachusetts Gaming Commission would be given the discretion to write the actual rules for sports wagering, but the Joint Committee on Economic Development and Emerging Technologies envisions a betting ecosystem that could include the state's resort casinos, the lone slots parlor, tracks with live horse racing, and as many as five online-only operators.

Bettors would have to be at least 21 years old and be physically present in Massachusetts.

While 17 other states, including neighboring Rhode Island and New Hampshire, have already authorized gamblers to place legal bets on sports, Massachusetts has been considering whether to similarly legalize betting since the U.S. Supreme Court in May 2018 ruled that the nearly-nationwide prohibition on sports wagering was unconstitutional and gave states the ability to legalize the activity.

"We didn't rush this process. We took a very deliberative approach, recognizing that there were goals to this legislation and above all else was to protect the consumer and the taxpayer. We always said that we wanted to be in the black

on this bill and not suffer losses like other states have done,” Rep. Ann-Margaret Ferrante, House chair of the committee, told the News Service on Friday.

“The second thing was that we wanted to make sure we put protections in for athletes and recognizing that bets are usually taken on horses and, in some states, dogs and other animals. With people, we really stepped back and said, ‘what provisions can we give the people who participate in these sports and especially for the college athletes?’”

Gov. Charlie Baker last year proposed a bill that would allow betting at licensed casinos in Massachusetts and through online platforms like Boston-based DraftKings. A slew of lawmakers proposed similar legislation.

With four months remaining for the Legislature to conduct significant business, the issue of sports betting could now vault onto lawmakers’ to-do lists alongside the state budget, a tax-hiking transportation bill, health care legislation and an expected economic development bill.

The legislation, crafted after a two-day hearing last May and months of research on betting laws and regulations in other states, is expected to net the state about \$20 million in annual revenue, Ferrante said, after accounting for the costs associated with enforcement.

It would allow wagers on professional and major college sports, though prop bets on individual college athletes would be prohibited. Bets on amateur sports, the Olympics, eSports or fantasy sports contests also would be prohibited.

Whether bettors should be allowed to place wagers on collegiate sporting events and whether legalization would be successful without collegiate betting emerged as a key consideration during the committee’s hearings last year.

“It’s a huge piece of the market, so if you prohibit college

betting you are ignoring an active black market,” Gaming Commission Associate Counsel Justin Stempeck told the committee last May. “On the other hand, if you allow college betting on sports, you have to be cognizant of the added pressures it puts on student athletes and they’re perhaps the most susceptible to these pressures because they’re not making millions of dollars on a professional league contract.”

Baker’s bill would not have allowed betting on any college contests, a decision his secretary of housing and economic development said was made in an attempt to take a “measured approach” to introducing betting.

Ferrante said the bill also establishes a Collegiate Health, Wellness, and Education Fund into which 5 percent of all sports betting revenues would be deposited to help shield college athletes from some of the possible pressures that could come with legal betting.

“If there’s a threat, if there’s a security issue, if there’s an educational issue, we would put aside revenue into a fund to provide them with the extra support that they would need,” the chairwoman said.

The three in-state casino operators – MGM, Wynn Resorts and Penn National Gaming – submitted joint testimony to the committee last spring in which they said they would support allowing some online operators, DraftKings or FanDuel, to get a piece of the sports betting pie.

The companies said they should be the only ones allowed to take bets at physical locations and that mobile betting should be reserved for themselves and “a limited number of daily fantasy operators with proven sports wagering experience.”

The committee appears to have followed a similar path. Only licensed casinos, the Penn-run slots parlor and live horse tracks could take in-person bets under the committee’s bill.

Because the slots parlor at Plainridge Park Casino is the only licensed live horse racing track for 2020, in-person betting could be limited to the three current casino operators. Each of the resort casinos could run up to three online pools and the slots parlor could run up to two.

The committee also adopted the idea of requiring mobile or online-only sportsbooks to have proven experience and to limit them in number. The legislation released Friday would allow up to five online operators and would require that they have at least one year of experience operating daily fantasy sports contests and experience offering online betting in at least two other states.

“This bill is an important step toward eliminating the pervasive illegal market, creating a safe and responsible sports betting experience for sports fans in Massachusetts and boosting the Commonwealth’s innovation economy,” a DraftKings spokesman said Friday afternoon. “We want to thank Chair Ferrante and the members of the House Economic Development Committee for their leadership and diligence on this issue. We look forward to working with Chair Michlewitz and all the members of the House Ways and Means Committee to move this legislation forward.”

In 2013 and 2014, 12.6 percent of Massachusetts residents had placed a bet on a sporting event in the last year, Gaming Commission Chairwoman Cathy Judd-Stein told lawmakers last year as they first dove into sports betting policy. By 2015, that percentage had climbed to 17.9 percent, but fell back to 16.9 percent in 2016, she said, citing the commission’s research into the topic.

People who might have influence over the outcome of a game or information not available publicly – athletes, coaches, umpires and officials, team or league employees and others – would be barred from placing bets, under the bill, as would employees of the Gaming Commission, sports betting licensees

and vendors.

Under the committee's bill, licensees would be required to pay a monthly tax of 10 percent of the gross revenue from sports wagers placed in person and 12 percent of the revenue from bets placed online or on mobile apps. The bill also levies a 12 percent tax on the monthly revenue for fantasy sports contest operators. The taxes would be deposited into the Gaming Revenue Fund.

Ferrante said the data her committee reviewed showed that about 85 percent of all sports wagering revenue is generated by mobile betting platforms. The difference in tax rates is meant to recognize the investments physical sportsbooks operators have or will have to make and the additional costs that hold down the profit margin at a physical betting location.

Sportsbooks tend to operate on small profit margins and the projections for state revenues under previously proposed legislation have hovered around roughly \$30 to \$35 million. Baker was confident enough about sports betting becoming legal to write \$35 million in sports betting revenues into the \$44.6 billion fiscal 2021 budget he filed last month.

The committee's bill does not appear to include any compensation for the sports leagues, though the NBA and others have pushed for a 0.25 percent fee on all wagers placed on any specific league's games.

"It is modest compensation that fairly treats the leagues as stakeholders and partners. If this happens in Massachusetts, it is new and exciting and a lot of people see a lot of opportunities. But you cannot escape the fact that absent our games, there is no new market to bet on or to be excited about," Alexandra Roth, associate counsel for league governance and policy at the NBA, told lawmakers last year.

Ferrante said the issue of "integrity fees" is one that could

become part of the conversation as her committee's bill moves on to the House Ways and Means Committee, the House floor and possibly through a similar process in the Senate.

"It was important to us to put a bill out so that we could start this process going and that may be resolved later on in the process," she said.

The bill also includes consumer safeguards to protect against problem gambling similar to those provisions put in place for casinos when Massachusetts expanded gaming in 2013, like allowing gamblers to add themselves to an exclusion list and requiring that operators implement responsible gaming programs.

Though much of the discussion during the committee's consideration of sports betting revolved around how to structure and regulate bets, the committee also heard from people who think the Massachusetts should not further expand state-sanctioned gambling.

"Last year alone, the American people lost \$118 billion of personal wealth to government-sanctioned gambling. Over the next eight years, the American people are on a collision course to lose more than \$1 trillion of their personal wealth to government-sanctioned gambling," Les Bernal, national director of Stop Predatory Gambling and a former chief of staff to former state Sen. Susan Tucker, said in May.

He added, "If you bring in sports gambling, particularly online, you're going to make these financial losses to citizens even worse."

Massachusetts State Troopers, North Shore Gang Task Force, and local Police Seize Significant Amount of Fentanyl

On Wednesday evening, Massachusetts State Police Gang Unit Troopers assigned to the North Shore Gang Task Force, along with FBI and Homeland Security Investigations Agents on the Task Force and Lawrence Police Detectives, executed a search warrant at second-floor apartment at 429 High St. in Lawrence. Members of the warrant team located and seized approximately 734 grams of suspected fentanyl in numerous packages in a bedroom closet and a dresser.

The occupant of the apartment, MANUEL ESTHEULIS-ALMONTE, 28, was taken into custody and booked at the Lawrence Police Station for trafficking in fentanyl, more than 200 grams.

During the raid Troopers, Agents and Officers also seized materials used in the packaging and distribution of narcotics, including cutting agents, digital scales, blenders, sifters, and plastic baggies.

A Gang Unit Trooper applied for the warrant after members of the Task Force earlier Wednesday observed ESTHEULIS-ALMONTE accept \$60 cash from a male believed to be from Maine – an interaction the Task Force Officers suspected was the first part of a street-level drug transaction. Information obtained by the Troopers and Agents indicated that the man from Maine was then supposed to circle the block in his truck and meet up with ESTHEULIS-ALMONTE again, at which time ESTHEULIS-ALMONTE would hand over two grams of fentanyl in return for the cash

payment.

But before that could happen, Task Force Officers located ESTHEULIUS-ALMONTE. The suspect had returned to his apartment after allegedly accepting the cash, and surveillance units observed him come out of the residence again and begin walking up High Street. As police rolled up on him, the suspect began to run but was apprehended after a brief foot pursuit.

ESTHEULIUS-ALMONTE, who had no identification on him, consented to let the Troopers and Agents return to his apartment with him so he could obtain his ID. He added, however, that he did not want his apartment to be searched.

When ESTHEULIS-ALMONTE entered the apartment with two MSP Gang Unit Troopers, the Troopers immediately observed several small twists – twisted small plastic baggies – containing suspected fentanyl, along with suspected drug paraphernalia. The Troopers immediately exited the apartment and secured it, and applied for the court-ordered search warrant that they received executed later that evening.

The defendant was expected to be arraigned Thursday in Lawrence District Court.

Who Remembers ... New Bedford's Del's Drive-In?

Here is another installment in our *Who Remembers?* series. You can browse previous articles by using the search bar on the right or by clicking **here**. These articles are strolls down memory lane. In some cases, the buildings, but new businesses have replaced them. In other instances, the buildings or even

the properties have been razed. Instead of a building, it may be a TV show, personality, or commercial that no one longer exists. Either way, it can't stop us from taking the Memory Lane stroll!

As always we would rather this be a discussion. No one knows this area better than those who grew up here! Please, leave constructive criticism, feedback, and corrections. We'd love to hear your anecdotes. Please share!

Today a mention of payphones, cassette tapes or 8-tracks, the milkman, et al can bring up confusion or disbelief among the young generation, there are some memories that we will never forget and never get bored of reminiscing about.

One of the memories that is a favorite of those of us that grew up in the 1950s and into the 1970s in greater New Bedford was Del's Drive-In owned and run by Adelard & Clara (Choquette) Millette, known to everyone as Uncle Del and later owned and operated by brothers Norman and Raymond Choquette.

Del's was a go-to spot for families as an inexpensive way to feed everyone, as well as a place a large number of locals had their first job at. Located on Acushnet Avenue where the touchless Rubber Duck Car Wash is now, the orange building featured carhops, the best frostiest Root Beer (served in ice mugs), root beer floats, skinned hot dogs and best-fried clams around.



Other favorite items on the menu were the "Swampwater" drink which was a mixture of root beer and orange, onion rings, and cheeseburgers. During Lent, families would head to Del's to pick up fish and chips – surely no kid ever complained about getting their fish then!

Del's also had locations in Fairhaven and Dartmouth across the road from Lincoln Park and many people have specific memories of the carhops (one girl had a gold front tooth and stood out), making 90 cents/hour in their first job, and of course, the miniature, shot-glass-sized A&W mug.

The popular thing to do after your family ate there was to head on over to the nearby Frates Dairy & Ice Cream later for a sugar cone of maple walnut ice cream or a banana split.

Do you have memories of visiting Del's or working there? How about interacting with the family? Leave a comment or share your pictures!

City of New Bedford roadwork sites for the upcoming week of March 1 ,2020 – March 6, 2020

The City of New Bedford has roadwork sites for the upcoming week of March 1 ,2020 – March 6, 2020 and they are as follows:

Eversource:

- Eversource will replace the gas mains at the following locations: There will be no services tied into the new mains until after April 1, 2020 as a precaution of the winter season.

- Fair St. from County St. to Orchard St.
- Jason Ct. from Crapo St. to 3 Jason Ct.
- Crapo from Grinnell to Rockland St.
- Summer St. from Studley to Locust
- Johnathan from Arnold St. to 57-59 Johnathan St.
- Rounds St. from Arnold St. to 141 Rounds
- Commonwealth Ave. between Kempton St. – Clarendon St.
- Metropolitan from Dartmouth Town Line To Commonwealth Ave.
- Peckham from Mt. Pleasant to County St.
- Mulberry St. from Larch to #8 Mulberry St.
- Cottage St. from Parker St. to Durfee St.
- Bolton from Fair St. To Kane St.

Other:

- Contractor working at Hazelwood Park for new power supply and upgrades to parking lot lighting.
- Contractor will continue water and sewer replacement along Cottage St between Parker and Maxfield Street. During working hours, Cottage St. may be closed to thru traffic with access by local traffic only at times. Southbound traffic will be detoured via Pope, Parker or Willis Street. North bound traffic will be detoured via Smith, Sycamore or Maxfield Street. Detour signage, police details and traffic controls will be in place.
- Contractor is scheduled to continue construction of the new pumping station and installation of the site utilities at the Front St./ Elm St. site. Elm St. between JFK Memorial Highway (Route 18) and Macarthur Drive will be closed to westbound traffic. Westbound traffic will be detoured via MacArthur Drive. There will be detour signage and traffic controls in place.
- Contractor will continue scheduling appointments and will have technicians visiting various locations throughout the city to replace meters and meter interface units (meter readers). There will be no traffic controls for this work.
- Due to ongoing construction at the High Hill Reservoir, residents may experience discolored water. The water is safe and the discoloration is temporary. We recommend allowing the water to settle for a few hours and then flushing your service line by letting the bath tub run for a few minutes until the water clears.
- Department of Public Infrastructure will be filling potholes on a continuous basis throughout the city.
- Please see the City of New Bedford website for additional street closings due to Special Events.
- Department of Public Infrastructure conducting its annual street sweeping program city-wide.
- The Contractor will begin work to relocate the existing water transmission main at the Tarkiln Hill Rd/Kings Highway

rail crossing. There will be temporary lane closures at times during construction. Police details will assist with traffic management and signage will be posted.

- The Contractor Scheduled to work 10 p.m.- 6 a.m., Sunday March 8th for Shutdown of 36" water main between Lambeth St and Park Ave. All services impacted by the shutdown have been notified. Water main will be back up and running by 6:00 a.m. Monday March 9th.

- The Contractor is scheduled to continue cleaning and performing CCTV work on wastewater piping along Macarthur Dr, JFK Memorial Highway, Herman Melville Blvd, Wamsutta St, Antonio L Costa Ave, Hervey Tichon Ave, Rodman St, Hamilton St, Centre St, Union St, Commercial St, Cannon St Power Plant, Airport Access Rd, Mill Rd, River Rd, Mazeppa St, Tarkiln Hill Rd, Hamlin St, Truro St, Wood St, and Howard Ave.

Dartmouth's "Big Value Outlet Plaza" sold

Shrewsbury commercial real estate developer Donat Aubuchon has purchased Dartmouth's "Big Value Outlet Plaza" from Dartmouth Select Board member David Tatelbaum for \$7.5 million.

The new owner plans to modernize the property with a new facade and keep the anchor store which has been around since 1990, but whose structure goes back to 1962. In addition, he wants to add a drive-through area to benefit a potential retailer that is interested in the location.

For those who frequent the plaza regularly, don't be alarmed: the current tenants will remain.

Renovations are expected to begin on the site this fall after

approval has been received by Dartmouth's Planning Board.

Massachusetts State Police K9 "Hulk" is gifted with ballistic vest

On Thursday, Jan. 30, the Community Animal Hospital in Shrewsbury presented a donation to the Massachusetts Vest-a-Dog non-profit organization that is being used to purchase a ballistic vest for K9 Hulk.

Hulk and his handler, Massachusetts State Police Trooper Nicholas Dumas, as well as MSP Sgt. David Stucenski and his partner, K9 Frankie, attended the presentation. Sgt. Stucenski and Trooper Dumas and their K9 partners are assigned to the MSP Special Tactical Operations Team, the department's specialized tactical entry and arrest team.

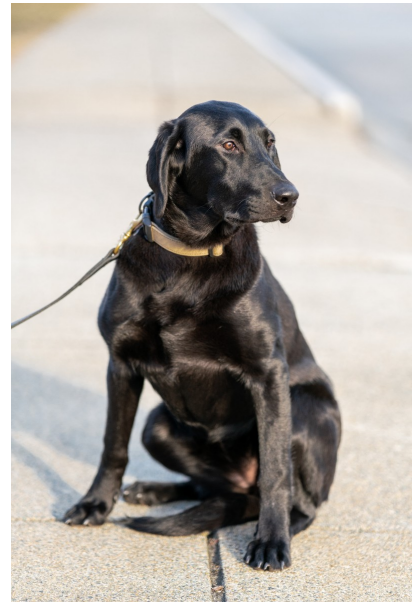
The Department is extremely grateful to the wonderful folks at Community Animal Hospital and Inn & Spa and Mass-Vest-a-Dog for providing this important piece of gear for Hulk and for their ongoing support of the Massachusetts State Police.

Community Animal Hospital and Inn & Spa

Massachusetts State Police photos:



**Faces Of New Bedford #236:
Kona**



Meet 8-month-old black labrador retriever Kona, a service K9 trained in detecting biological weapons, chemical weapons, and pharmaceutical-based agents.

Travis Rebello, a New Bedford Fire Fighter and member of the Massachusetts Hazardous Materials Response Division heard about a dog the Los Angeles County Sheriff's department had on their team and after lots of research thought a trained k9 with those skills would be a great tool to have in this area.

Kona comes from a line of service dogs out of Buxton, Maine. Her mother was a cadaver dog and her father was trained in search and rescue. She joined her partner Travis Rebello, and his family in December soon after beginning her training in January with the K9 training unit with the Bristol County Sherrif's Department.

Travis, while he's had other dogs in his life had never really had experience training, the Sherrif department worked hard with both of them for many weeks until he was able to handle his dog and Kona passed her certifications.

Now that Kona has been trained and certified she'll be utilized during big events in the area such as the New Bedford Half Marathon, Day of Portugal, the Portuguese feast and at Gillette Stadium. Her ability to smell and detect these

hazardous materials is far more advanced than the machines available and Travis hopes she becomes a model for future K9s to be added to other teams.

Faces of New Bedford is a New Bedford Guide project being undertaken by Josh Souza. If you'd like to nominate someone or ask a question you can inquire with him through email at josh@newbedfordguide.com.

Faces of New Bedford began as a project by Colton Simmons. You can find Colton on Instagram: <https://instagram.com/simmonscolton>.

Massachusetts Health Officials Say State is Prepared for Coronavirus

By Katie Lannan, State House News Service

Stressing that the risk of contracting coronavirus remains low in Massachusetts, state public health officials said Tuesday that they are prepared for a potential outbreak.

Tens of thousands of cases of the respiratory illness now known as COVID-19, caused by a new coronavirus first identified in Wuhan, China, have been diagnosed worldwide. Public Health Commissioner Dr. Monica Bharel told reporters Monday that there is still one confirmed case in Massachusetts – that patient “continues to recover,” she said – and that there is not “community-level spread” of the virus in

Massachusetts.

Bharel said the department is monitoring 231 people in self-quarantine, who returned from travel in China, for potential symptoms. Another 377 people have completed monitoring and were released without symptoms.

"When we look at this current COVID-19 situation, we don't speculate on how or when it will spread, so the most important thing I can tell people today is that we at the Department of Public Health are prepared," Bharel said. "We are prepared to address what comes our way. People should live their lives normally and go about their normal activities."

President Donald Trump and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention officials conducted a 6 p.m. briefing on the illness.

Bharel said state public health officials are in daily contact with federal agencies. The department has issued guidance for clinicians, schools and businesses, and launched a website to update the public on COVID-19.

The department is also in regular communication with health care providers and local boards of health, Bharel said. It is supporting hospitals in their "surge planning" procedures, to make sure beds are available if needed, and directing clinical labs to take steps to prepare in case they receive specimens from patients under investigation.

Bharel said the department is monitoring impacts to the supply chains for personal protective equipment like masks and gloves, and providing health care facilities with strategies to "optimize" the use of such equipment.

"We have been in touch with our colleagues throughout the health care system, and we have been told that at this time there are adequate supplies throughout the health care facilities," she said. "We anecdotally have heard of some spot

shortages but overall, the supplies have been adequate.”

Members of the public should not wear face masks unless they are sick, Bharel said.

She said individuals who have traveled and develop symptoms of respiratory illness should contact their health care provider and discuss their travel history. The department is advising Massachusetts residents to follow CDC guidance on future travel.

Bharel said the risk for contracting coronavirus is “much, much lower than the risk of contracting influenza,” and that Massachusetts residents should get flu shots if they have not already done so.

Many of the steps for preventing the flu, colds and COVID-19 are the same, she said: wash hands regularly, cover coughs, and stay home when feeling sick.