

LOCAL NEWS

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FITCHBURG STATE UNIVERSITY

Gearing up for the fall semester

Institution celebrates 125th year with new degree programs

FITCHBURG» Fitchburg State University launches new undergraduate and graduate programs and kicks off a yearlong celebration of its 125th anniversary with the start of the fall semester in September.

The majority of new resident students will move in Monday, Sept. 2 (Labor Day) between 8 a.m. and 3 p.m.

Move-in will start with registration at the Wallace Civic Center on John Fitch Highway, with vehicles then directed up North Street to the main campus.

North Street between Pearl and Ross streets will be closed to traffic during the move-in (approximately 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.) on Monday, and portions of Highland Avenue and Cedar Street may be closed at times as well. Some temporary road closures may be instituted during early student move-in on Sunday, Sept. 1.

Returning resident students move in Wednesday, Sept. 4, during which there may also be some road closures near campus. Fall semester classes begin Thursday, Sept. 5.

Academically, Fitchburg State is reorganizing its departmental divisions. The university's 15 departments will now be housed in the School of Arts & Sciences, the

School of Business and Technology, the School of Education, and the School of Health and Natural Sciences.

The university also launches its new undergraduate majors in environmental public health and educational studies this fall, each the first of their kind at any public institution in Massachusetts.

▪ The environmental public health degree is an interdisciplinary program spanning community health, geospatial data analysis, social justice, and community service. The major will be available for students who are interested in health sciences but seek an alternative career choice than those offered in traditional

CLASSES » 6A

Classes

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STEM or health professions majors. It focuses on the relationships between people and their environment, promotes human health and well-being, and fosters healthy and safe communities.

▪ The educational studies program will provide an opportunity for students to examine broad educational topics from a number of diverse perspectives, bridging educational concepts and principles in political, historical, theoretical, and social contexts. Graduates of the educational studies non-licensure program will have a broad view of education necessary for career paths that require a background

in formal and informal educational settings.

▪ The university also launches its latest online MBA program, focusing on healthcare management. Designed to be affordable and student-centered, the program will help students develop a broad range of skills useful in identifying and implementing effective solutions for challenges across the evolving healthcare landscape. Students will study a spectrum of healthcare marketing, finance, and legal topics and engage in participatory learning through online class discussions and collaborative learning groups.

▪ Also recently launched is the university's new master's concentration in social media. Part of the university's Master of Science in Applied Communi-

cation, the accelerated, 100% online program is designed to meet rigorous academic and career training goals and to prepare students for a variety of occupations in communication fields within business, industry, government, nonprofit, and health services.

Fitchburg State also celebrates a milestone with the 125th anniversary of its founding. Throughout this celebration of 125 years of changing lives, the university will offer programs and exhibits that honor a legacy of innovation in disciplines including education, healthcare, communications media, public safety, and more. Visit [fitchburg-state.edu/125](https://www.fitchburg-state.edu/125) to learn more and keep up to date with the planned celebrations.

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FITCHBURG STATE UNIVERSITY

Professors teaching in China this summer



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Fitchburg State President Richard S. Lapidus (front row, far right) and Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs Alberto Cardelle (front row, third from right) attended the opening ceremony.

FITCHBURG» More than 10 Fitchburg State University faculty are in Shanghai, China this summer to teach Chinese students as part of a new university collaboration with the AUIA International Summer School.

Fitchburg State President Richard S. Lapidus and Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs Alberto Cardelle attended the opening ceremony.

Approximately 90 Chinese

students enrolled in more than 40 American universities, including one student from Fitchburg State, will be taking these summer courses at the Shanghai University of Finance and Economics between July 1 and Aug. 2.

The faculty, will be teaching courses in art, business, economics, history, Japanese, mathematics, philosophy, physics, psychology and speech.

Fitchburg State and AUIA

signed an agreement in December creating the partnership.

Chinese students typically want to spend the summer at home to keep their English language skills sharp and to catch up on academic credits.

Next year, more Fitchburg State students will be able to take advantage of the international partnership and will benefit from new planned scholarships.

LOCAL

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COLLEGE TOWN

FSU profs to teach in China

Ten Fitchburg State University professors are teaching in Shanghai, China, this summer as part of a new exchange program.

Around 90 Chinese students enrolled at American universities – including one at Fitchburg State – will take the summer courses,

which are being offered at the Shanghai University of Finance and Economics this month. The American faculty will teach classes in art, business, economics, history, math and other subjects.

The arrangement was made possible by a recent agreement between Fitchburg State and the AUIA International Summer School. More Fitchburg State students will be able to take classes through that partnership next year, according to the university, and apply for some planned scholarships as well.

EARNING THE BADGE

GOAL: TO HAVE RECRUITS HIT THE GROUND RUNNING



PHOTOS BY JOHN LOVE / SENTINEL & ENTERPRISE

Fitchburg State University Police Academy recruits run around the track at Elliot Field on June 13 during their fourth week of training. Watch video at sentinelandenterprise.com.

'Better as a team' at FSU Police Academy

First in a series

By Nicole DeFeudis
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FITCHBURG» The pack of nine bounds toward the finish line. It's 50 degrees outside. Rain spits on the recruits as they round the track's last corner. Time is running out.

It is the fourth week of this year's summer Fitchburg State University Police Academy. Today, recruits must run 2 miles in under 22 minutes.

They are close to finishing when Attleboro native Jessica Ferreira falls behind. The other recruits finish their laps, then double back for her.

"Sprint! Give it all you got!" they shout as they run alongside Ferreira. The quick pace ensures the recruits meet the Massachusetts Police Training Committee Standard of 1½ miles in 16½ minutes.

The rain picks up as Ferreira dashes around the corner. She crosses the finish line. The stopwatch reads 10:59 for her last mile — one second to spare.



Recruits marched to Hammond Hall to drop off some items they collected for the FSU food pantry during their training on June 13. Leading the way is recruit Ryan Manganelli from Waltham.

"That's just kind of the team mentality here," Academy Director Lisa Lane McCarty said, donning a proud grin.

This group of graduate students will be the second to complete Fitchburg State's 17-

week police academy. If they endure the arduous coursework and physical training, the recruits will graduate Sept. 13 as certified police officers.

The academy was spearheaded in 2013 by now-retired Fitch-

burg Police Chief Robert DeMoura and Fitchburg State instructor David Weiss. DeMoura sought to change the way police are trained.

Typically, a recruit must be

Running

FROM PAGE 1A

hired or sponsored by a police department before enrolling in a 24-week academy to be certified. The Fitchburg State Police Program aims to transform students into “street-ready” police officers by the time they graduate, Weiss said.

“A person doesn’t walk into a hospital and say, ‘I want to be a nurse,’” he explained, adding that nurses study extensively in college. The same thinking, he said, should apply to police officers.

“Our desire is to have a well-trained young person be able to have all the skills that they need and the knowledge that they need to be able to deal with the complexities of today’s society,” Weiss said.

Most of these nine recruits have been training since they arrived as freshmen at Fitchburg State.

Juggling training with a full course load was stressful at times. The recruits attended monthly meetings in uniform, met GPA requirements, and worked out independently in between homework and classes to stay in top shape.

The group completed a third of the MPTC curriculum as undergraduates, and walked the stage in May with bachelor’s degrees in criminal justice.

“I mean, it’s definitely been challenging,” said recruit Matthew Beal, who is from Townsend. But the summer academy, he said, has been the most difficult challenge yet.

Monday through Thursday, the team assembles at Elliot Field at 7 a.m. sharp. They start with physical training, which usually consists of running and strengthening exercises like push-ups and sit-ups.

“Unless it’s thundering or lightning, they’re out here,” McCarty said. Fridays are set aside for defense tactics training.

After a 1 ½-hour workout and a quick shower, it’s off to class, which starts at 9 a.m. The recruits file into the classroom, alert from physical training, and open matching black binders chock-full of notes. They are hungry to learn.

Class topics range from motor vehicle law to homeland security, and are mostly taught by full-time police officers from around the state.

“You’ll always have a friend [to count on] in this academy,” Newton Police Sgt. Frank Eldridge said at the start of his Suicide Prevention and Intervention course last Thursday.

And he was right. Over the last four years, the team has become a family.

“We’ve known each other for so long, so we’re better as a team,” said Ferreira, who has wanted to be a cop since childhood. She grew up in the foster care system, and was adopted when she was 8 years old.

“I want to kind of give back to the community that saved me as a kid,” she said, adding that she wants to help other kids in tough situations.

Alaina Socrat, a Douglas native, transferred to Fitchburg State from MassBay Community College her sophomore year. She studied forensics before realizing that policing was her calling.

It’s usually too difficult for transfers to jump into the fast-paced police program. But numbers were down that year, McCarty said, so administrators made an exception for Socrat to start her junior year.

“I felt like it was kind of like fate,” Socrat said.

The students acknowledged that the profession is sometimes perceived negatively these days, following various incidents of police misconduct nationwide.

“I want to be part of the change in shedding a better light on police officers,” said Shirley recruit Adam Hyde.

Around 4 or 4:30 p.m., the recruits pack up and head home. Beal, whose day begins at 5 a.m., said he spends most of his evenings preparing for the next day of training.

Sometimes, homework will simply consist of ironing uniforms and shining boots. Other times, the recruits write essays and mock police reports or citations. “There’s a training-related component to everything we do,” McCarty said.

Once the summer academy is over, the students will dive right into a one-year graduate program in criminal justice.

But until then, it’s back to the grind. Physical training starts at 7 a.m., and just like any other day, the recruits will get through it together.

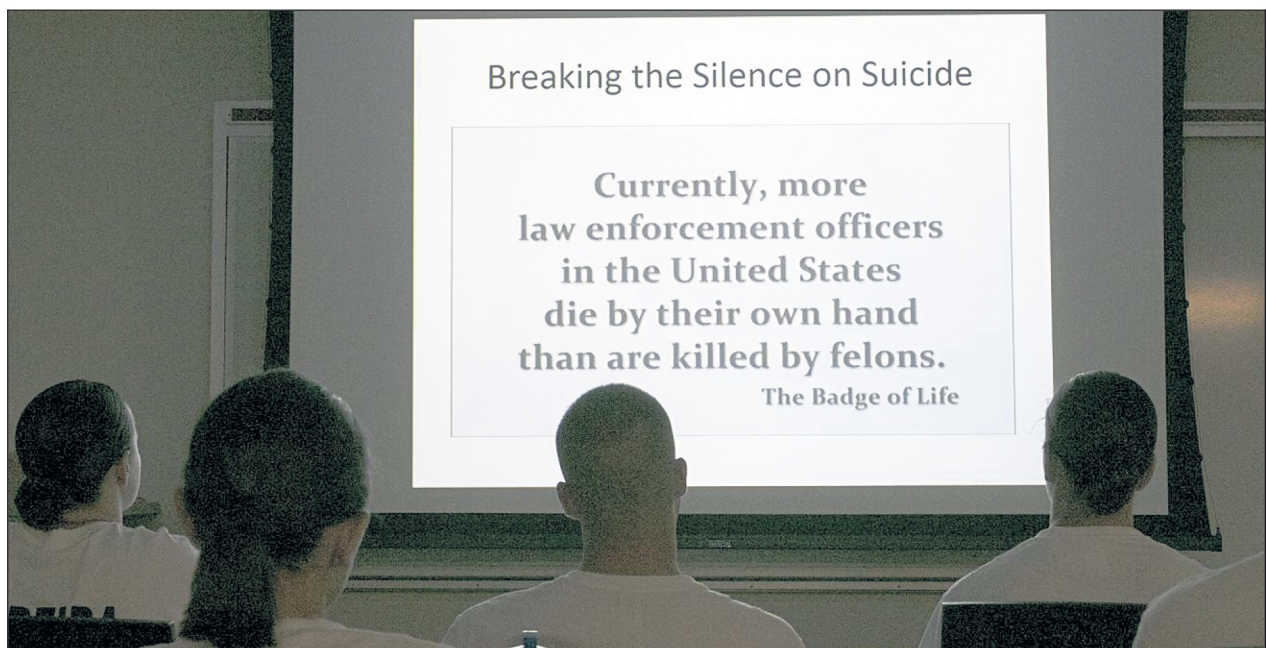
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PHOTOS BY JOHN LOVE / SENTINEL & ENTERPRISE
FSU Police Academy Instructor Eric Bailey gets the recruits ready for a run during the physical training on June 13 at Elliot Field.



Police Academy Director Lisa Lane talks about the program in her office in the McKay Building on campus.



Academy recruits take a class in suicide on June 13 with Sgt. Frank Eldridge with the Newton Police Department Special Operations and Training Bureau.

EARNING THE BADGE

'YOU PUSH UNTIL YOU CAN'T PUSH ANYMORE'



PHOTOS BY JOHN LOVE / SENTINEL & ENTERPRISE

Fitchburg State Police Academy cadet Madison Medina, from Pelham, N.H., puts fellow cadet Jayson Urato in handcuffs during a hands-on training class last month.

Women in Fitchburg State Police Academy rise to challenges

By Nicole DeFeudis
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FITCHBURG» Picture this: A bartender asks a rowdy, intoxicated man to leave. While not causing any major trouble, the man does not leave.

Thanks to training, Fitchburg State Police Academy recruits know what to do.

It's Friday, and in the academy, that means defense tactics training.

Nine recruits graduated with bachelors' degrees from Fitchburg State University in May, and by the end of the summer academy, will be certified police officers.

Today, the team practices escorting someone who is passively resistant to a safer location.

Introduce yourself. Keep your balance as you approach the suspect. Instruct them to place one hand on their head.



Cadet Alaina Socrat, of Douglas, asks a question in a class on abuse prevention orders at Fitchburg State University.

Cadets

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From behind, use both hands to secure the suspect's other arm straight across your torso, maintaining control of their hand. Keep the suspect calm. Walk.

Recruit Madison Medina, of Pelham, New Hampshire, and Leominster recruit Jayson Ura-to take turns escorting each other across the George J. Bourque Gymnasium in Fitchburg State's McKay Complex.

"After doing this for 10 years... I've never had a female recruit that can't do every single thing that male recruits do," says Sgt. John Fraher, lead instructor of defensive tactics and use of force.

Three of the nine recruits are women, which Academy Director Lisa Lane McCarty says is "huge." She recalls working in other police academies, where only a few of a total 40 or 50 recruits were female.

"It is hard to recruit women into this field, because it is so male-dominated," McCarty said.

Roughly 88% of law enforcement officers are male, according to a 2013 U.S. Department of Justice report. But the tide is turning, McCarty says.

Just under 25% of total recruits in the Fitchburg State Police Program are female, including incoming freshmen, she says.

Douglas recruit Alaina Socrat says she doubted her ability to complete the academy earlier this year.

"I am a woman, a lot of guys

are stronger than me..." she says. Plus, women on the force face challenges that men don't typically experience.

For example, long hair.

When Socrat transferred into the academy as a junior, her hair wasn't long enough to knot into a bun. Municipal Police Training Committee regulation calls for women's hair not to exceed the bottom of the collar.

Until her hair grows out, Socrat fixes it in a tight, neat ponytail at the back of her head — not a strand out of place. Men typically don't have to worry about that, McCarty says.

The three women say shower time between physical training and class — 15 minutes — isn't enough to wash their hair and fix it back in a bun. So, they don't.

The women endure the same workouts as the men, except for push-ups and crunches.

The MPTC standard is lower for women on these two exercises — but all the recruits regularly exceed the minimum requirements, McCarty says.

Recruit Jessica Ferreira, of Attleboro, has come a long way with her push-ups. Before the academy started, she says she could barely do six, which is the minimum amount female recruits must perform during the first phase of physical training.

After training with a few friends, Ferreira did 10 push-ups the first day of physical training. Last week, she did 22.

"You push until you can't push anymore, and that's what these ladies are doing," McCarty says, adding that she has witnessed every recruit build strength.



JOHN LOVE / SENTINEL & ENTERPRISE

From left are Madison Medina of Pelham, N.H., Jessica Ferreira of Attleboro, and Alaina Socrat of Douglas at the Fitchburg State Police Academy.

The female recruits don't just survive, McCarty stresses: They thrive.

Medina, who attended Lowell Catholic High School, graduated Fitchburg State as valedictorian in May with a 4.0 grade-point average. She juggled the academy with a full honors course load.

"This is something I want to do, and I'm going to make it happen," Medina told herself throughout her undergraduate career. She says she can't imagine herself in any other profession. "It's a way I can make a difference," she says.

Females on the force make a difference, McCarty explains. She's encountered cases when a female victim would be more comfortable speaking with a

female officer, but there were none on the force.

"I feel like women come sometimes at a different perspective than males do to a situation," Socrat adds, explaining that females often tend to be more maternal.

Socrat says people are sometimes shocked when she tells them she is training to be a police officer. "It's a slap in the face," when others doubt her ability, she says.

After a pep talk with instructors, Socrat is now sure of her decision to join the police force.

"Fifty percent of the population is female, so I feel like 50% of the department should be female," Ferreira says.

As for the male recruits, Medina says they have all been

motivating, just as they would to any other man.

"I feel like my confidence is getting built up a little bit, because I am able to take one of the guys down to the ground when we're doing the (exercises)," Socrat says.

Socrat understands that she will encounter challenges, such as suspects larger than her.

Through the academy, she has learned techniques to overcome those challenges.

And she is ready. They all are.

Have a question for a Fitchburg State Police Academy instructor? Submit your inquiry to ndefeudis@lowellsun.com. Nicole DeFeudis: [@Nicole_DeFeudis](https://twitter.com/Nicole_DeFeudis) on Twitter

EARNING THE BADGE



PHOTOS BY JOHN LOVE / SENTINEL & ENTERPRISE

Family members of cadets, at rear, watch as the cadets train in Fitchburg State University's George J. Bourque Gymnasium as part of the Fitchburg State Police Academy on Saturday. The academy held a family orientation day to let families see what their cadets are battling through.

AS CADETS BATTLE, FAMILIES SEE GROWTH

At Fitchburg State academy, future police officers show off newfound discipline

By Nicole DeFeudis
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FITCHBURG» Fitchburg State University's George J. Bourque Gymnasium feels like the inside of an oven. Despite the beginning of a weekend-long heat wave, police academy recruits hustle.

Dripping sweat, recruits hold planks, leap for burpees and squat. Today, they perform for an audience: Parents and loved ones fill the bleachers, watching the team complete defense tactics training. "To see it today makes it a little bit more real," said Joan Gower, mother of Acton recruit Andrew Gower.

For the first time, the Fitchburg State Police Academy welcomed family members to

observe a day in the life of a recruit.

"I didn't realize the academy piece is so intense," said Angela Ferreira, Attleboro recruit Jessica Ferreira's mother.

After graduating Fitchburg State with bachelor's degrees in criminal science, the recruits entered the 17-week academy. If they pass Municipal Police Training Committee standards, they will be certified police officers by the end of the summer.

Each day, the recruits meet at 7 a.m. — and not a minute later — for 1½ hours of physical training. After a quick shower, they are expected in class by 9 a.m., where local officers teach Municipal Police Training Committee curriculum.

After class, Academy Director Lisa Lane McCarty usually finds the recruits assembled in a circle in the parking lot,



Leominster Police Sgt. John Fraher chats with the cadets' families. Listening to him are Glenn Ferreira and Angela Ferreira, the parents of cadet Jessica Ferreira of Attleboro.

Cadets

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sharing notes and discussing lessons.

"I've watched these young men and women go through some tough times just to get here," she said.

She has advised the students since they joined the program as college freshmen.

"It's so sort of wonderful to me to see where these young people came from," McCarty said to the group of parents who assembled for orientation.

Before coming to Fitchburg State about 2 ½ years ago, McCarty worked at the Boylston Police Academy. The academy there held family orientation every year, she said.

Because recruits tended to be a bit older, attendees typically consisted of spouses and children.

Inspired by the success of the Boylston academy's orientation, McCarty initiated something similar at Fitchburg State.

"I'll do this every year now," she said. "You can see how proud they (the parents) are watching their children do something that's not very easy."

A few parents teared up as they watched videos of the recruits' journey and observed training.

"We hear the stories when she gets home, but there's really nothing like being here and seeing it," Angela Ferreira said.

While she worries about the dangers of the job, she knows her daughter, Jessica, is prepared.

"She's a strong girl, and she'll make a fantastic police officer," she said.

"To see it (the training) sort of validates that they're working hard," said Glenn Ferreira, Jessica's father.

Many of the parents have noticed their children grow — physically and mentally — over the last nine weeks in the academy.

Kim Kendall, mother to Leominster recruit Jayson Urato, admires her son's determination. He played football through college, all while attending classes and participating in the police academy,

"If he can get through this, he can get through anything," she said, adding that she reminds him of this all the time.

"This is a great program, and Director Lane (McCarty) has been very accessible for parents too," Kendall said.

It can be hard to watch a child push through the academy, said Patty Socrat, mother of Douglass recruit Alaina Socrat. There are many rough days, when Patty feels for her daughter.

But the certification will be well worth the struggle, she said.

"She (Alaina) has compassion and empathy, too, which is really what you want in an officer, especially in this day and age," said Alaina's father, Aaron Socrat.

Every parent, as well as McCarty, beamed with pride throughout the event.

"I'm a mentor, I'm a disciplinarian, and I'm always telling them that at graduation I'm lucky if I don't cry," said McCarty, who is awed by how far the recruits have come. And it's only Week 9.

Nicole DeFeudis: @Nicole_DeFeudis on Twitter



JOHN LOVE / SENTINEL & ENTERPRISE

Cadets Jayson Urato of Leominster and Matthew Beal of Townsend run through a drill as members of their family watch.



JOHN LOVE / SENTINEL & ENTERPRISE

Cadet Alaina Socrat of Douglas, right, chats with her mom, Patty, and brother, Nick, at the end of drills on family orientation day.

Sentinel & Enterprise

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EARNING THE BADGE

Recruits aim to make impact

Police Academy Director Lisa Lane McCarty discusses training tactics

By Nicole DeFeudis
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FITCHBURG » Fitchburg State University Police Academy Director Lisa Lane McCarty has worked in criminal justice for over 30 years — but she has lived it for as long as she can remember.

McCarty credits her father, retired Pepperell Lt. Tom Lane, and her mother, Linda, a former executive assistant for the non-profit New England Police Part-

nership, for her interest in criminal justice.

“If you grow up in a law enforcement family, you still have to live it every day,” she said.

McCarty recalled her freshman year at the University of New Hampshire, when her father pursued a man accused — and later convicted — of murdering a Townsend woman and her two children. It was then that McCarty made it her mission to help victims of violence, thus beginning a decades-long career of advocacy and training.

After graduating in 1991 with her bachelor's degree in political science, and her master's in criminal justice from Fitchburg State in 1998, the Pepperell

native began work as support staff for the Middlesex District Attorney's Office.

“I always say that my job at the DA's Office prepared me for everything I've done since,” she said.

From there, McCarty worked in victim advocacy at the Leominster Police Department, the Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance, and the Department of Youth Services.

“Training has always been one of my passions,” she said. So when the opportunity arose for a full-time program coordinator position at the Boylston Police Academy, she took it.

“Because my dad was a cop, I think I just want to make sure
POLICE » SA



JOHN LOVE / SENTINEL & ENTERPRISE

Fitchburg State Police Academy Director Lisa Lane McCarty talks to the families of the cadets about their time in the academy during a recent family orientation day.

Police

FROM PAGE 1A

that police officers are safe, and that they are doing the right things out in the community, because he did the job right," she said.

In 2017, she became director at the Fitchburg State academy.

"This sort of married all of my passions in one job, and I didn't even see it coming," she said.

This year's recruits will be the second class to complete the Fitchburg State summer academy. They joined the police program as freshmen at the state university, and have taken Municipal Police Training Committee curriculum while earning bachelor's degrees in criminal justice. At the end of the summer, they will be certified police officers.

"I'm able, here, to still work with young people... and I also get to sort of train them and prepare them for their future policing career.

And I get to watch them grow up while they're doing it," McCarty said.

McCarty is much more than director to Fitchburg State police recruits. She cheers for them on the sidelines as they run laps or do push-ups. She is a confidant, a supporter, a source of inspiration, and by the time recruits graduate, a friend.

On Friday morning, McCarty met with a Sun reporter to discuss the program she takes endless pride in.

What are the core lessons taught in the academy?

"Our training, and the philosophy, comes right from the Municipal Police Training Committee.

One of the hugest components is the philosophy of community policing.

You know, that you work with the community, you're part of the community, you're not set apart from it ... Everything that police officers are asked to do starts with the community, and sort of fostering trust and communication. So community policing, it's listed number one here under the declaration of principles — that's how important it is.

Everything we train here, there's a learning outcome. We do everything for a reason and it's for a training reason, it's for a learning reason, it reflects the values that we want to see them bring back to their police departments ...

We teach them that from the minute they get here as freshmen, that integrity, honor and discipline are things we're going to promote, and teach ..."



Chief Tom Galvin of the Berlin Police Department listens to Academy Director Lisa Lane McCarty as she talks to the cadets' families.

JOHN LOVE / SENTINEL & ENTERPRISE

Have you noticed any big changes over the years in how we train police officers?

"I think that one of the things that especially MPTC — but I see it nationally too — is sort of helping train the officers more in de-escalation.

So you hear that word a lot. And it's not that police officers did not de-escalate prior to this climate, but I think we're doing a better job of (teaching recruits), what does de-escalation mean?

So de-escalation, to me, means that you are taking a potentially dynamic situation, and you're strategically thinking through it before you go to the next step ... there's obviously a legal pyramid that they (officers) follow with use of force.

But before you even get to the point where you're thinking of being physical with someone, they (MPTC) want you to give some time, space and distance in that millisecond.

Now they (officers) don't have a lot of time for this, but it's to just give you some space and some thought about 'how can I possibly de-escalate this?' And that's sometimes as simple as how you talk to people ...

If you go up to someone and say, "Ma'am, I need to see your driver's license," versus, you know, "Give me your driver's license," that's already going to make a huge impact...

There are times when de-escalation doesn't work, and that's when there are laws in place and we train them (on) what do you do after that."



Cadet Jessica Ferreira listens during one of the classes in June.

JOHN LOVE / SENTINEL & ENTERPRISE

One of our readers asked, why does the MPTC no longer use the Cooper norms in training?

"These are called the Cooper Aerobics Institute norms. Cooper standards have always been around.

If you Google it, you'll see nationally that this is sort of what law enforcement has relied on in the past to say how fit should you be, or how fit do you need to be to be a police officer.

All police officers have to take a physical abilities test, which is called a PAT, and that's a Commonwealth of Massachusetts Human Resource Division requirement... that was the only prerequisite for getting into an academy, and that's still in place today.

Now as of September 2019, MPTC is now requiring an entry level standard for all police offi-

cers to get into an academy. So in other words, they're saying you have to start out this fit.

So what typically happens is you pass a PAT test, you come into the academy, and you have to participate in at least 70% of all physical training ... but if you come in out of shape, it's sort of hard to catch up while you're in the academy.

As of September 2019, there are going to be entry-level recruit fitness standards, and they're going back to these Cooper norms."

What makes this academy different from other academies?

"Our academy is different in that our police students come in as freshmen, and as I said, they're given the MPTC officer guide before they even start classes.

So essentially, our students,

for four years, are expected to follow the conduct, academic, appearance and uniform standards that a traditional recruit follows for five months.

About a third of the MPTC academy curriculum is embedded in coursework they take as undergraduates with our professors here.

So a lot of people have asked me, 'Can we get into your police academy?' And the answer is no. Because you have to have been in the program since you were a freshman.

Our professors, and this is important, are MPTC-certified instructors, so our academy is shorter.

Our academy is 17 weeks right now, because they've taken about a third of the curriculum.

So traditionally it should be about 24 weeks... So that 17 weeks encompasses all their practical skills and anything that needs to be taught by a police officer.

(Through our program) we're going to get a highly educated and a highly trained police officer who's been following conduct rules — so it goes back to the integrity, the discipline, and the honor, and the ethics — the entire time they were here ... They are certified as police officers after four years."

What are some common misperceptions about police training?

"I think people aren't aware enough of the work that we do around community policing and valuing diversity, and problem solving in the community, and being proactive rather than reactive.

I think a lot of time what you see in the media and in the movies is the tactical, sort of high-speed stuff that they do: the use of force incidents, the chasing suspects...

I don't think people have an understanding that we are spending a lot of time in the police academies in this state just training police officers to understand most importantly that they are a part of the communities that they are serving — they are not outside of it."

What are your goals for the academy going forth?

"Obviously enrollment. Since I've been here, the enrollment has gone up... I just want to see enrollment continue. Most importantly, I'm excited to watch these recruits continue to graduate every year, and see where they go and what they do. And I know they'll do remarkable things. I know they will."

Nicole DeFeudis:
@Nicole_DeFeudis on Twitter

FITCHBURG STATE COMMENCEMENT

'DON'T SETTLE'



JOHN LOVE / SENTINEL & ENTERPRISE

Graduates walk to the quad for the 123rd commencement ceremony for undergraduates at Fitchburg State University on Saturday.

FSU graduates told hard work pays off for 639 in the Class of 2019

By Jon Winkler

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FITCHBURG» There was an audible sigh of relief from the undergraduate class of 2019 when Dr. Alberto Cardelle allowed the students to sit down. Not because the students realized they officially survived four years of college and could start their adult lives, but because most of the female graduates had been wearing high heels since 9 a.m.

Six hundred and thirty-nine students walked across the stage on the “quadrangle” grassy area in the middle of Fitchburg State University Saturday morning for the 123rd

undergraduate commencement ceremony. Family, friends and school staff cheered on the graduating class as they collected their diplomas. The school has now sent out a plethora of new young individuals with degrees in everything from technology education to political science to nursing.

This year’s commencement speaker was Steven Borges, a graduate of FSU’s class of 1990 and current CEO of Nypro Healthcare. Borges said that he expressed his excitement for being invited back to the school to his fellow alumni. Their response?

“My so-called friends responded with, ‘We love you,

Complete Spring graduation list on page 6A

we are excited for you, but no way would have thought you would give the commencement speech,” Borges said.

The Somerset native noted that his older sister, Diane, was also an FSU alumni. Borges said that while he entered FSU undeclared, he found his path with the help of Professor Joseph McAloon. Throughout his time at FSU and his life, he picked up seven lessons he wanted the graduates to take with them.

“Build your foundation to learn, select a process for looking forward, don’t settle, push your boundary of risk versus reward, serve others, lean on those who love you and be there for them, and follow your heart,” Borges said. “In doing

these seven things, you can anticipate success and misses, challenges and opportunities, and among all of it, you can expect pride and growth to be the best Fitchburg State alumni, and the best person you can be!”

Local government officials also came by to salute the new graduates, including Fitchburg Mayor Stephen DiNatale and State Senator Dean Tran.

“I know how hard you have worked,” Tran said. “Take the time to enjoy the triumph. We need all of you to thrive and be the best and brightest.”

“This accomplishment belongs to you as well as your loved ones here today,” DiNatale said.

Some of the students graduating have little time to cele-

Graduates

FROM PAGE 1A

brate. Cameron Lacouture of Leominster, excited to earn his Bachelor of Science degree in business administration, said he starts his new job as a credit analyst at the Sterilite Corporation in Townsend this Monday.

“You’re always nervous whenever you start something new,” Lacouture said.

Kiya Bodendorf of Westfield, with her Bachelor of Science degree in sociology, said she’s moving to Garden Grove, California at the end of the month to find work.

“California has always appealed to me and I thought this was the best time to make a huge life-changing move,” Bodendorf said. “I’m really excited and a little apprehensive about the future.”

Valedictorian Madison Medina, who earned summa cum laude status on a 4.0 GPA with her Bachelor of Science degree in crimi-



JOHN LOVE / SENTINEL & ENTERPRISE

One of the many decorated mortar boards at the ceremony.

nal justice, will start her tenure at the Municipal Police Training Committee academy next week. Medina, a graduate of Lowell

Catholic High School said that after juggling varsity softball and soccer with her education, she hopes her career path leads to

becoming a detective.

“I think being a police officer is one of the most rewarding jobs,” Medina said.



JOHN LOVE / SENTINEL & ENTERPRISE

Graduates Andrew Gower, on left, from Ayer and Adam Hyde from Shirley just got their diplomas at the ceremony.

3 speakers, 1 theme: Be true to yourself

Fitchburg State salutes 629 grads at commencement

By Craig S. Semon
Telegram & Gazette Staff

FITCHBURG – The 639 graduates of the 123rd annual commencement of Fitchburg State University could not have picked a better day than Saturday to start the next chapter of their lives.

Nor could they have picked three better speakers.

Fitchburg State University President Richard S. Lapidus, Steven D. Borges, executive vice president and chief executive officer of Nypro Healthcare and a 1990 graduate of Fitchburg State University (and this year's commencement speaker), and valedictorian Madison Medina of Pelham, New Hampshire, gave the graduates food for thought to help nurture them on the journey of life that lies ahead.

And if there was an underlining theme shared by the three speakers it was be true to oneself and follow one's heart.

Speaking first, Mr. Lapidus philosophically mused on the topic of "purpose, exploration and the importance of being oneself."

"Don't be afraid of your differences," Mr. Lapidus. "Instead, acknowledge them, build on them because they might draw you to your own special purpose in life."

Mr. Borges gave the graduates seven "takeaways" to guide them on their path during the commencement address.

His "takeaways" included build your foundation to learn, select a process for looking forward, stay true to yourself, push your boundary of risk versus reward, serve others, lean on those who love you and be there for them, and follow your heart.

Expressing how during the journey of life and professional careers one will be faced with many challenges, Mr. Borges tearfully shared that he and his wife lost their 3-year-old son Eric to meningitis, 24 hours after bringing him to the emergency room.

"Life is not a sprint but rather a journey, and it's yours to take," Mr. Borges said, "Lift yourself back up when things don't go your way. Leverage your support system of family and friends. But most importantly, if you learn from these experiences, they will make you stronger."

Mr. Borges also advised the dangers of technology and global exposure.

"Do not underestimate the speed of information, global connectivity and how poor split-second decisions can take a lifetime to defend,"



Class Valedictorian Madison Medina addresses her fellow graduates during the 123rd commencement ceremony Saturday at Fitchburg State University. View a photo gallery at telegram.com. [T&G STAFF/ASHLEY GREEN]

he said.

After thanking her parents for molding her into the person she has become, Ms. Medina gave a short but sweet valedictorian address.

"If I could give you one piece of advice today it would be to break the mold and be unapologetically you," Ms. Medina said. "Don't let the fear of being judged or failing keep you from being true to yourself... Every failure and misstep along the way has shaped you into the individual you are today. Although the future may be uncertain right now remember that these past four years have equipped you with the tools needed to succeed in whatever path you choose to take."

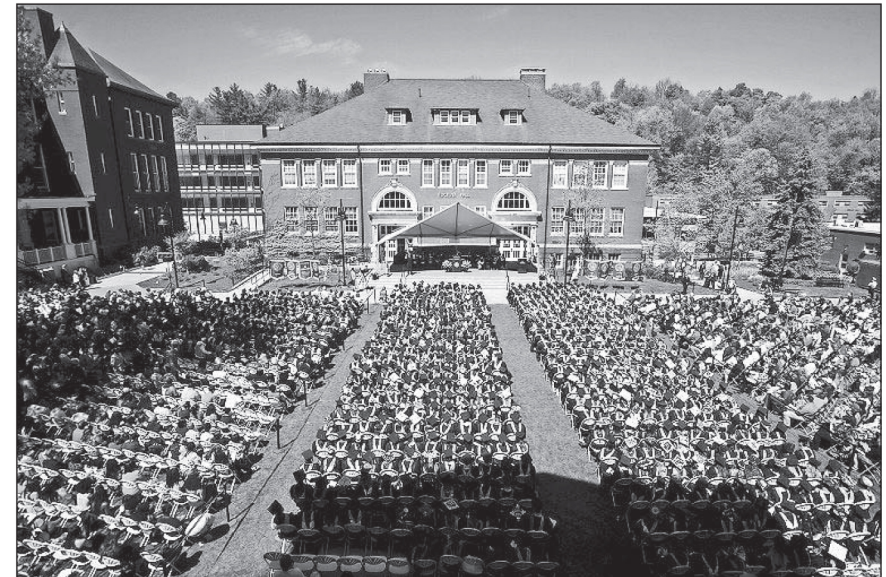
FITCHBURG STATE UNIVERSITY GRADUATES

Brooklyn, Conn.: Meena Roy MS
Ashburnham: Katelyn M. Becotte BS, Rebecca A. Behringer BS, Tyler J. Caforio BS, Sabrina M. Caldwell BS, Richard T. Cook MBA, Kathryn A. Evancic BS, Janelle G. Fargues BS, Rebecca Gardner BS, Carol E. Healey MED, Peter A. Jones BSE, Dylan R. Mei BS, Rachel C. Vargeletis BS
Ashby: Michael J. Carson BS, Austin L. Gilbert BS, Samuel C. Laszlo BS, Samuel C. Laszlo BS, Karen Zimmerman MS
Athol: Aimee L. Bachelder BS, Heather M. Corbett MED, Raeanne Mullet BS
Auburn: Nicholas J. D'Acri BS, Patrick B. Germain BS, John G. Halliday BS, Dominique A. Jose BS, Paige Q. Nystedt MED, Alyssa J. Reynolds CAGS
Baldwinville: Katharine M. Hill BSE, Jared C. Merritt BS, Edward C. Zink BS
Barre: Shannon M. McInerney BS
Berlin: Nicole I. Zwicker BS
Blackstone: Tyler W. Brabham BS
Brimfield: Shannon R. Cibien BS
Charlton: Brian J. English MBA, Erin M. Tetreault BSE, James B. Tripp Pockevic BS
Cherry Valley: Scott L. Gillaspie MBA, Calvin Nguyen BS
Clinton: Caitlin R. Bogue MBA, Catrina G. Connolly BS,

Marlene Cupka MS, Kelvin A. De Leon BS, Haley Gaughan MED, Meaghan K. Gnieski MED, Shayne E. O'Malley BS, Rishaini A. Obispo BS, Jennifer M. Zelent MBA
Douglas: Jordan A. Ayotte BS, Alaina M. Socrat BS
Dudley: Stacy A. Bond MED, Emily M. Fortin BS, Alexis G. Menard BS
Fitchburg: Jorge L. Aguirre MBA, Fernando Antelo BS, Webster R. Bokoo BS, Barry M. Bouchard BS, Nicole A. Bourgeois BS, Matthew P. Capone BS, Steven P. Carosello MBA, Sabrina A. Collins BSE, Sean M. Daley BS, Rachel Dunning BS, Sandy T. Duong BS, Brandon J. Ecklund BS, Ununuma K. Eligwe MBA, Samir Elmasri MED, Laura J. Finizio MED, Katelyn A. Fitzgerald MED, Michael P. Fleming BS, Zoe P. Frati BS, Stacey Garcia BS, Lisa P. Gilchrist BS, Javoy A. Griffiths BS, Erin M. Guimond MED, Elizabeth A. Hawthorne BSE, David P. Hirst BS, Kyle F. Hofer BS, Benjamin F. Hyde BS, Evelyn Island-Mateo MBA, Kelsey L. Jordan BS, Zachary R. Kane BS, Derick R. Kay BS, Grace N. Kiigi BS, Roxanna D. Kurtz MS, Yionghiasider Lee BS, Heather M. Leger MED, Tyler T. Leger BS, Bonnie F. McCullough CAGS, Alicia M. Navarro BS, Matthew K. Pawson BS, Natalie I. Pellecchia BS, Eric F. Ramos BS, Jennifer G. Ritari BS, Nicholas E. Roberts BS, Kevin Sarsfield MBA, Cynthia B. Schilling BA, Samantha S. Staples MS, Brandon R. Stone BS, Shania M. Therrien BS, Ashley I. Thibault BS, Tatiana Topala BS, Joshua F. Veronesi BS, Daniela R. Wholey BS
Gardner: Natalie M. Antaya BS, Cammy L. Aukstikalnis BS, Jennifer E. Burnell MED, Emily A. Campbell BSE, Rachel J. Champa MED, Ashley Comley BS, Darrion R. Donaghy BS, Anthony D. Ferrari BS, Sierra D. Lopez BS, Kaitlyn M. Mearns BS, David A. Ormsby BS, Cassandra S. Pillsbury BS, Jennifer P. Plummer BS, Connor M. Puchol BS, Jerrika St. John BS, Seth A. Vogel BS
Grafton: Cole V. Antalek BS
Harvard: Leanne M. McDonald BS
Haverhill: Janet A. Barnett-Boucher MBA, Kyle D. Berk MED, Amber M. Braxton BSE, Austin M. Dulong BS, Brett M. Pettis MED, Anthony Temperino BS
Holden: Alanna R. Delahanty MED, Laura E. Fahey BS, Ngockhai T. Ly MBA
Holliston: Janelle M. Hart MED, Hailey R. O'Brien BA
Hudson: Elizabeth J. Davidowicz MBA, Michael Lodi MBA, Timothy P. Maye BS, Kayla L. Monteiro BS, Megan A. Ramsbottom BS, Hannah Webb MS
Jefferson: Brittany T. Benoit BS
Lancaster: Luke Gilchrist BS, Connor J. King BS, Benjamin P. Sherman BS, Malorie S. Volent MED, Torrey B. Wang BS
Leicester: Elizabeth A. Scotia BS
Leominster: Nnenna J. Ajuzieogu MBA, Joyce A. Amankwah BS, Julius Annan BS, Ashley C. Arpano MA, Rebecca Ashman BS, Aaron E. Beaulieu BS, Jennifer Belfield BS, Elizabeth Benard MBA, Tara P. Burke BS, Michael A. Carpenito MBA, Matthew Casaubon BS, Emiliano Cespedes BS, Alec B. Cornish BS, Alison J. Courteau MED, Kylie R. Dembek MBA, Megghan P. Duffy BS, Lindsey V. English MBA, Emily M. Flathers BSE, Kadidiatou Fofana BS, Deborah L. Fratturelli



President Richard Lapidus presents Hailey O'Brien with the Dr. Robert V. and Jeanne S. Antonucci Student Leadership Award during the 123rd commencement ceremony Saturday at Fitchburg State University. [T&G STAFF/ASHLEY GREEN]



The 123rd commencement ceremony at Fitchburg State University on Saturday. [T&G STAFF/ASHLEY GREEN]

MBA, Ryan B. Gallagher BS, Amir Hamza BS, Tina K. Huynh BS, Sarah G. Jolicoeur MED, Paige N. Kaczor BSE, Miranda H. Kaldis BS, Leanne L. Kay BS, Cameron C. Lacouture BS, Taisha Lopez BS, Ashley R. Lopez BS, Donna M. Lozeau BS, Zoeth H. Magembe BS, Anthony Manganaro BS, Auria J. Manktelow BSE, Hannah E. Mason MED, Joshua A. Melanson MS, Noah R. Milliard BS, Elizabeth G. Muturi BS, Chantal B. Nadeau BS, Regina G. Pelham BS, Adam J. Ranucci BS, Molly P. Richard BS, Anysha Santiago Colon BS, Michaela E. Sarasin BS, Darcy M. Saulnier MED, Kimberly A. Sherman-Cook MED, George A. Silvia BS, Julianna K. Smith BS, Zachary A. Smith BS, Silvana M. Sosa BS, Veronica L. Torres BS, Ketrina Uka MED, Jayson R. Urato BS, Sean M. Vincent BS, Denzel M. Weatherspoon BS, Nichole A. Wheeler MBA, Jessica R. Wolf BS
Lunenburg: Michelle A. Abbascia BS, Sean D. Beverly BS, Heather L. Dancause MED, Danielle Fleckner BS, Andrew C. Fletcher BS, Conner Ghiz BS, Michelle L. Gosselin BS, Ryan D. Hallisey BS, Hannah E. Keohan BS, Rachel E. Kersey BS, Sarah J. Lewenczuk CAGS, Samantha A. Lucier BS, Kaela R. Martinez-Niemela BSE, Lee A. McDonald BS, Rebecca A. Paquette BSE, Richard V. Parsons MED, Lynette J. Pimentel BS, Matthew J. Pinard MBA, Paul S. Reddington BS, Christina M. Stanford BS, Damiana Z. Toscano BS
Marlboro: Evan A. DeSimone BS, Haneen Jaara MS, Halle J. Lopez BS, Miguel A. Menendez BS, Lucas B. Peixoto BS, Amy K. Saunders BS, Kristin E. Sherwood MED, Brittany P. Vermilyea BS
Mendon: Brandon A. Gaulin BS
Milford: Brandon O. Avila BS, Amy T. Dulak MBA
Millbury: Selia G. Cox BS, Kellie M. Fiore BS, Megan L. Samara BS
Monson: April Y. Scott BS
North Brookfield: Paul R. Valley BS
North Grafton: Rachel S. Kalagher BS
Northboro: Suzanne N. Karioki BS
Northbridge: Jay W. Reiss BS
Orange: Catherine L. Gullage BA, Collin J. Mailloux BS, Kayla Pollack BS, Melissa L. Rodrigues BS
Oxford: Patricia J. James MED, Lindsey L. Murphy BS, Matthew J. Talman CAGS
Paxton: Matthew R. Elicone BS, Casey A. Murphy MED
Princeton: Jacob A. Elie BS
Rutland: Vanessa K. Sackett MED

Shrewsbury: Tyler R. Bradway BS, Kathryn M. Carroll BS, Kyla M. Collins BS, Christopher J. Gerardi BS, Gao D. Le MBA, Lucas D. Remington BS, Lisa M. Sequeira MED, Kevin T. Woods BS, Kimberly A. Youksteller BS
Southboro: Jules E. Stackhouse BS
Southbridge: Jacqueline V. Fernandez MED, Cristal M. Ramos BS
Sterling: Emily M. Murphy MED, Debra E. Perini BS
Stoughton: Samantha A. Gomes BS, Esther Jeannite MBA, Amy J. Kelly BS
Templeton: Joseph R. Canney BS, Rebecca T. Charette BS, Allison Cormier BS, Timothy D. Foss BS, Selina Thomsen MBA, Katelyn H. Williams MBA
Uxbridge: Benjamin Tryon MBA
Vineyard Haven: Hope S. Fecit MED
West Bridgewater: Kristine K. Chylinski MED
Warren: Kevin McCleary MBA
Webster: Kristen F. Cameron MS, Danyel J. Stone BS
Westboro: Meaghan Duffy MBA, Allaire M. McDonald BS, David A. Somerville MED
Westminster: Drew E. Anderholm BS, Erika B. Andrews BS, Jack T. Arsenault BS, James E. Boyack MBA, Madison D. Cole BS, Sean P. Curry BS, Tracey B. Dinardo MBA, Gwen Farley MBA, Michael J. Graves BS, Jeffrey D. Letendre BS, William J. Mallet MBA, Jonathan P. Mangini BS, Karissa J. Ross BS, Brett T. Smith BS, Victoria S. Straitt BS
Winchendon: Kathryn R. Alden BS, Michel L. Cocuzza BS, Donna M. Duvarney-Heacox BS, Daniel L. Fournier BS, Austin Landress BS, Olivia H. Lore BS, Scott E. Murphy BSE, Jordan P. Provencal BS, Jacqueline A. Skawski BS, Christopher R. Willett BS, Jonathan D. Zukowski BS
Worcester: Laith H. Alnajjar BS, Lauren B. Andrews BS, Maimuna Bah-Marques BS, Alexander Bello BS, Lisa M. Dagnello MS, Pamela Daly MBA, Rachel B. Danso BS, Diana Desai MBA, Sterley R. Dimanche BS, Zachary R. Doucimo BS, Lois O. Dwira BS, Hannah G. Dziejewitn BSE, Gabrielle E. Enyim BS, Mercy A. Frimpong BS, Jessica L. Galvin BS, Shirley N. Hammond BS, Kristen N. Houbre BS, Benjamin R. Lapin BS, Eunice M. Maina BS, Saisha Matias BS, Nicole M. Moquin MBA, Joseph N. Mwaura BS, Philip M. Papoojian MS, Brooke M. Rogers BS, Melanie S. Santiago BS, Karen M. Santos BS, Justin R. Smola BS, Sarah C. St Amour MS, Jesse J. St Laurent BS, Joseph W. St Laurent BS, Anh H. Vo BS, Jonel J. Yeans BS

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EDUCATION

FSU, MWCC team up with high schools for early college program

BOSTON» Fitchburg State University, Mount Wachusett Community College, Fitchburg High School, Leominster High School, Sizer School and Gardner High School will launch a new early college program that will give students an opportunity to earn 12 college credits while still in high school.

The Early College Designation was among several announced Thursday by Gov. Charlie Baker during an event at Bunker Hill Community College in Boston.

The colleges and areas high schools collaborated to develop the North Central Massachusetts Early College Academy. The academy will build upon early college programs already in existence at the member

schools, creating an overarching model that incorporates their best practices and expands the number of students who can be accommodated. The program is designed to serve students who are first-generation, low-income and otherwise under-represented in higher education.

“This collaboration will open doors of opportunity for high school students across the region and will give them the tools to persist and succeed in college,” Fitchburg State President Richard S. Lapidus said.

“This designation creates a new pathway for area students to accelerate their education and begin college courses in high school,” Mount Wachusett Community College President James Vander Hooven said. “We are fortunate to have such strong local partners and I look forward to expanding the opportunity for early college to more students.”

The academy’s curriculum pathways will initially include liberal arts; health care; business/computer information; biology; industrial technology/

EDUCATION » 4A



SUBMITTED PHOTO

(From left) Gardner High School student Karl Siniawski, Fitchburg High School student AhSen Khan, Leominster High School Principal Steven Dubzinski, Fitchburg High School student Wonuola Ashaju, Fitchburg High School Principal Jeremy Roche, Gardner High School Principal Paula Bolger, Gardner High School student Trinity Bridge, MWCC President James Vander Hooven, Fitchburg State University President Richard Lapidus, Fitchburg State Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Alberto Cardelle, Fitchburg State Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs Cathy Canney, MWCC Assistant Dean for K-12 Partnerships and Civic Engagement Fagan Forhan, MWCC Vice President for External Affairs, Communications and K-12 Partnerships Lea Ann Scales, and MWCC Director of Early College & Dual Enrollment Sara Vettesse.

Education

FROM PAGE 3A

engineering; and environmental and earth science. Through the academy, students will be able to attain college credits and credentials prior to graduation, moving them towards a certificate, associate’s and/or

bachelor’s degrees. This work will ultimately result in a cohesive public education strategy that bridges high school and higher education for youth in North Central Massachusetts, and will serve as a framework for expansion across the region.

The program provides college exposure to students early in high school

who otherwise may not have considered higher education an option. Those barriers will be addressed during the program, facilitating successful degree program completion and opening students to career opportunities that may not have imagined for themselves.

Under the Early College Designation put

forth by the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education and Board of Elementary & Secondary Education, approved designated early college programs in Massachusetts will provide equitable access; guided academic pathways; enhanced student support; relevant connection to career; and effective partnerships.

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TECHNOLOGY IN THE CLASSROOM

Leominster students turn teachers for a day

Frances Drake pupils show FSU profs computer skill

LEOMINSTER» Members of the Fitchburg State University faculty recently visited Frances Drake School in Leominster to see how pupils are using Google Suite technology in their classrooms.

The university is looking at ways to incorporate Google Classroom in its teacher preparation programs so teacher candidates are prepared to use the technology school districts are currently using. The pupil-led demonstration was designed to offer a practical view of its potential.

In the recent visit, three fifth-grade classrooms welcomed Fitchburg State students and faculty for a demonstration of Google Documents, Google Classroom and Google Slides. The elementary school teachers and pupils shared how the programs support their everyday learning, including collaborative creation of presentations, research and classwork.

“Students showing Fitchburg State’s faculty how Frances Drake integrates technology as a learning tool is authentic and relevant professional development,” said Fitchburg State Associate Dean Lourdes Ramirez, M.Ed., who organized the visit. “The faculty found it



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Fitchburg State Professor Rob Shapiro watches as Frances Drake School pupils Kaitlin Hurtado, center, and Peace Osoro demonstrate Google Suite.



Fitchburg State Professor Danette Day gets a demonstration of Google Suite in a classroom at Frances Drake School in Leominster.

useful to see first-hand how teachers are integrating technology in their classrooms. They were impressed by how engaged

and excited students were about learning. And, they were also impressed by the students’ knowledge of the technology as they were

able to answer all the questions faculty asked them.

Ramirez said the faculty also saw how the pupils use technology to collaborate with each other.

“Collaboration certainly prepares students not only though their years in school, but for their future careers,” she said. “Teachers were able to provide immediate feedback to students on the work they were producing, even using their cell phones while walking about in the classroom.”

The university is continuing to partner with local school districts to benefit both pre-K to 12 pupils as well as Fitchburg State’s own students.

August 19, 2019

Fitchburg State adding MBA in health care



PHOTO | GRANT WELKER
Fitchburg State University

Fitchburg State University is expanding its MBA program to including an online program in healthcare management.

The program has been designed to accommodate those already working in the field, with all coursework online in a seven-week time period, Fitchburg State said Monday in announcing the new program. The new MBA can be completed in as short as 12 months.

The healthcare management MBA is aimed at helping students identify and implement effective solutions for challenges in healthcare, with subjects of study including healthcare marketing, finance and law, the university said. It will be taught by the same Fitchburg State faculty who teach on campus.

The new program begins this fall and will have multiple start dates each year. Tuition will be \$12,510, with no requirements for a graduate management admission test or graduate record examination.

Fitchburg State also has MBA degrees in management, accounting and human resources management.

Fitchburg State signs nursing degree agreements with community colleges



PHOTO | GRANT WELKER
Fitchburg State University



By Grant Welker

Fitchburg State University has signed nursing-degree agreements with community colleges in Worcester, Gardner, Bedford and Fall River.

The agreements, which the university announced Monday, guarantee students a spot at Fitchburg State's bachelor's nursing program and is aimed at helping ensure more of the state's nurses have bachelor's degrees in the coming years.

Fitchburg State's agreements will help students at Quinsigamond Community College in Worcester, Mount Wachusett Community College in Gardner, Middlesex Community College in Bedford and Bristol Community College in Fall River. The agreements, which waive application fees and essay requirements for students, were created with support from a Massachusetts Department of Higher Education nursing and allied health grant.

The project is expected to produce at least 18 additional students a year with a bachelor's degree, Fitchburg State said.

The Massachusetts Action Coalition, an industry advocacy group, has a goal of having 80% of the state's nurses holding a bachelor's degree by 2020. At the most recent count in 2017, the group said the rate was 56%, up from 49% in 2010.

The group says bachelor's degrees are critical for nurses to help them advance in their career and support the state's growing need in the field.

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FITCHBURG STATE

Admissions pacts to aid nursing students

FITCHBURG » Newly-signed agreements between Bristol Community College, Middlesex Community College, Mount Wachusett Community College and Quinsigamond Community College will guarantee students' seamless admission to Fitchburg State University's baccalaureate nursing programs.

The collaborations will help the state meet the Massachusetts Action Coalition goal of having 66 percent of the state's nurses hold a bachelor of science degree in nursing by 2020, and 80 percent by 2025.

"These agreements will help students achieve their academic and professional goals while supporting the state's public health objectives," said Fitchburg State President Richard S. Lapidus. "Our public higher education institutions will continue to look for productive collaborations."

"This agreement is a win for students and the communities they will serve as nurses. It creates a clear path from an Associate's Degree in nursing at a community college to a Bachelor's Degree while being able to work in the field," said MWCC President James Vander Hooven. "This is a fantastic example of what the strong relationship between MWCC and Fitchburg State University can accomplish for our communities and students."

"Providing Bristol's students with seamless admission to Fitchburg State's baccalaureate nursing programs is an exciting extension of our mission to bridge access to critical health-

STUDENTS » 6A

Students

FROM PAGE 3A

care education for high-paying career opportunities in our region," said Bristol Community College President Laura L. Douglas. "The college is excited to provide students with innovative learning resources from both institutions, while

promoting a college-going culture in our local communities."

"Middlesex is pleased to work with a tremendous public higher ed partner like Fitchburg State University on a much needed ASN to BSN transfer program," said Middlesex Community College President James C. Mabry. "This program is both a great opportunity for community college

students, but also helps expand the pipeline for high quality health care professionals that are in great demand across the state."

"This agreement will allow our nursing students to easily and seamlessly matriculate to a four-year nursing degree program at Fitchburg State," said Quinsigamond Community College President Dr. Luis G.

Pedraja. "At QCC, we are constantly working to facilitate ways for our students to fulfill their all of their educational goals, through articulation agreements with both private and public four-year institutions."

The agreements were created with support from a Massachusetts Department of Higher Education Nursing & Allied Health grant. The project is

expected to produce at least 18 additional students a year with the bachelor's degree.

Participating students will be guaranteed acceptance to Fitchburg State when they sign up for their first year of community college and will be placed in contact with the university's admissions and continuing education offices. They will be allowed to transfer up to

88 credits (including 39 from the nursing major) from the sending community college. Application fee and essay requirements will also be waived for participating students.

Fitchburg State's baccalaureate nursing options include in-person and online programs, as well as a program tailored to LPNs seeking to complete their BS in Nursing degrees.

FITCHBURG STATE

Ramos named one of state's 29 Who Shine

FITCHBURG » Alexander Ramos Jr. of Leominster represented Fitchburg State University when the state celebrated “29 Who Shine” in its public higher education system at a ceremony at the Statehouse on Friday, May 3.

Ramos, graduating in May with a degree in political science, has distinguished himself as a standout scholar and leader throughout his time at Fitchburg State, starting as a high school student when he began dual enrollment courses on campus.

He immediately impressed university faculty with his talent and intellect, and continued to excel over the rest of his time at the university, being named to the Dean’s List and President’s List in recognition of stellar academic performance. He is a Commonwealth Honors Scholar who represented the university with distinction as a member of its nationally recognized Moot Court team.

Ramos’ service to the university community includes welcoming prospective students as a tour guide in the Admissions office and working as an orientation leader to help new students become acclimated to life at Fitchburg State.

His advocacy for fellow students continued with his elected service as representative to the Student Government Association and then as student representative to the university’s Board of Trustees. He was also appointed to represent students on Fitchburg State’s All University Committee (which evaluates



Alexander Ramos Jr.

changes to curriculum, academic policies and student affairs), where he served as vice chair.

Ramos has also contributed to the strong connections between the university and wider community, interning first in the office of Fitchburg Mayor Stephen L. DiNatale, where he researched proposed legislation and analyzed ordinances passed by the local City Council.

He also attended political events and assisted the mayor’s chief of staff with constituent services. In his senior year, Ramos interned in the office of U.S. Rep. James P. McGovern, where he assisted with constituent services. In addition, he organized a public affairs program for local access television, providing informed student perspectives on local and national issues of the day.

Ramos was joined at the 29 Who Shine ceremony Friday by faculty mentor Paul I. Weizer, a member of the university’s Economics, History and Political Science Department.

“Dr. Weizer has consistently gone above and beyond in his support of my personal and professional aspirations, from advising me on what classes to take to prepare for law school to counseling me about whatever hardships I encountered,” Ramos said. “I am forever indebted to him for his guidance and teachings.”

LOCAL

COLLEGE TOWN

2nd #HackFitchburg on tap

Fitchburg State University's ideaLab will host its second #HackFitchburg event next month, the school announced.

The "fun-filled brainstorming activity" is scheduled to run from 6 to 8:30 p.m. Sept. 23 at the ideaLab, in Fitchburg State's theater block at 717 Main St., Fitchburg, the university said.

The concept of #HackFitchburg is to bring "community stakeholders" together to come up with a

solution to a single question affecting the city, according to Fitchburg State.

"These events bring people together and make conversations about community development engaging through active brainstorming," Joshua Croke, a consultant at the ideaLab, said in a statement. "It also provides opportunities for residents to be directly involved in sharing their ideas for their neighborhoods and the communities of which they are a part."

The event is free. To register, visit hackfitchburg.eventbrite.com.

STATE GRANTS AWARDED

FSU TO USE FUNDS TO ASSIST IN DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Fitchburg State University President Richard Lapidis stands to the right of Lt. Gov. Karyn Polito after the state announced the recipients of grants for downtown redevelopment in New Bedford on Tuesday.

Awarded two TDI Local grants for \$30,000 and \$35,000

NEW BEDFORD » The Baker-Polito administration has announced the expansion of the Transformative Development Initiative, a MassDevelopment program for Gateway Cities, including Fitchburg, designed to accelerate economic growth within focused districts.

Lt. Gov. Karyn Polito made the announcement with MassDevelopment President and CEO Lauren Liss, New Bedford Mayor Jon Mitchell, and members of the New Bedford legislative delegation at the WHALE Co-Creative Center in New Bedford.

“In Gateway Cities across the commonwealth, we’re seeing investments and capacity-building through the Transformative

Development Initiative leading to strategic wins and progress toward long-term development goals,” said Gov. Charlie Baker.

“Our administration is pleased to further expand this program, which represents an innovative, block-by-block approach to revitalizing local economies.”

“I was proud to join local officials, community members, and our partners at MassDevelopment today to announce new support for the Transformative Development Initiative,” said Polito.

The new fellows will join established fellows in existing districts in Chelsea, Fitchburg, Lawrence, and Worcester.

Fitchburg State University was awarded two TDI Local grants for \$30,000 and \$35,000. TDI Local is a small grants program that supports local market development.

These small grants foster business, resident, and property owner engagement and build community identity while improving the public realm.

Fitchburg State University, together with ReImagine North of Main, will use the \$30,000 Lease It Local grant for its Retail District Lease program, which will provide lease subsidies to businesses in a concentrated location to encourage business and property owners to cultivate a critical mass of local business leaders.

The TDI partners and local property owners will match grant funds with an additional \$30,000.

This \$35,000 Local Lift grant will support the North of Main Façade Improvement Program, which provide incentives for private-sector improvement of commercial buildings in the TDI District.

The program aims to make

revitalization efforts affordable by providing matching grant funds to private building and business owners for façade projects that to protect the historic integrity of the building while improving the appearance of the downtown area. FSU, alongside ReImagine North of Main and local property owners, will match grant funds with an additional \$35,000.

“Often called ‘an accelerator for places,’ the Transformative Development Initiative helps leverage redevelopment efforts and build momentum in Massachusetts’ Gateway Cities,” said MassDevelopment President and CEO Lauren Liss.

“MassDevelopment is grateful for the support of the Baker-Polito Administration as we expand the program further and direct additional resources for continued, locally led economic growth and capacity building.”