

FITCHBURG STATE

PLANNING A SECOND ACT



PHOTOS COURTESY FITCHBURG STATE

Federal, state and local elected officials and business leaders recently toured the future home of Fitchburg State University's performing arts center on Main Street. The tour was organized by the university to celebrate the project's impact on the local and regional economy and cultural vibrancy.



Fitchburg State University purchased the long-dormant performing arts center on Main Street in 2016. The building, nearly a century old, has been closed since 1987. The university's plans to restore and reopen the theater as part of a performing arts center is expected to spur greater economic and cultural revitalization downtown and in the region.

Theater Block at forefront of creative economy discussion hosted by Fitchburg State

By Matthew Bruun
Fitchburg State University

FITCHBURG » Recently, Fitchburg State University welcomed dozens of federal, state and local leaders for a discussion and tour of the transformative performing arts center that is being proposed in the heart of Main Street.

"Public universities have an important role to play in the communities that host them," Fitchburg State President Richard Lapidus told the assembled guests, including representatives from more than 15 legislative districts, in addition to Con-

gressional staff members and other state and local cultural and business leaders.

Lapidus was joined by speakers including state Sen. John Cronin, state Rep. Michael Kushmerek, Fitchburg Mayor Stephen DiNatale, and North Central Massachusetts Chamber of Commerce President Roy Nascimento in explaining the collaborative process that has kept the project moving forward, with state and federal funding complementing the university's own investments in the key parcel.

Fitchburg State purchased the long-closed Main Street

THEATER » PAGE 8



PHOTOS COURTESY FITCHBURG STATE

Fitchburg State University purchased the long-dormant performing arts center on Main Street in 2016. The building, nearly a century old, has been closed since 1987. The university's plans to restore and reopen the theater as part of a performing arts center is expected to spur greater economic and cultural revitalization downtown and in the region.

Theater

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ater in 2016 and has begun a major project to create a performing arts center at the site. The first phase of the project is already complete, including a state-of-the-art game design studio for students in the capstone game design program, and the ideaLab, a university/community creativity and entrepreneurial space.

As the assembled leaders were informed, the next phase of the project will be the new construction of a "black box" theater adjacent to the main building, designed to accommodate a variety of events and programs with a seating capacity of 250 people. It will serve as a teaching facility for students in the university's performing arts and humanities, as well as community and external groups. Also known as the "Theater-Lab," this black box theater will be a point of collaboration for students, educators, and the public at large, with the goal of ensuring that new and diverse public audiences have access to quality arts and humanities programming.



COURTESY FITCHBURG STATE

The exterior of the long-dormant performing arts center on Main Street is pictured.

The final phase of the project will be the renovation of the historic theater itself. First opened in 1929 as a vaudeville theater, the 46,250-square-foot building will become a state of the art venue with up to 1,200 seats.

The reception and tour was designed to show the wide economic and cul-

tural impact the performing arts center will have on the city and region. Lapidus explained the theater project is part of more than \$250 million in public and private development now in the pipeline on Fitchburg's Main Street, including residential, commercial and civic components. The theater project alone is ex-

pected to generate millions of dollars a year in ongoing economic activity beyond the initial investments and jobs from the construction itself.

"We've seen other towns in the region enhance their

communities and economies by investing in the arts and I'm so pleased to see this initiative happening now in Fitchburg," said Massachusetts House Speaker Pro Tempore Kate Hogan. "As a result of thoughtful

and deliberative planning, coupled with partnerships and collaboration at all levels of business, government and the university, the performances, events and programming offered at the new theater are expected to reach audiences beyond the campus and to positively impact visitors, residents and our local workforce."

"I'm excited for the future when downtown Fitchburg is a destination for people all over Massachusetts and beyond to enjoy live entertainment and theater alongside city residents," said Mass Cultural Council Executive Director Michael Bobbit, who was among the visitors who toured the theater project. "The rehabilitation of Main Street started with a vision to use arts and culture to rebuild and rebrand, but what stands out to me most is the incredible collaboration amongst state and local leaders, the business community, the arts community, the university, and private citizens to make it happen. This is a model to be replicated across the state. I can't wait until the ribbon cutting."

FITCHBURG STATE



COURTESY FITCHBURG STATE

Fitchburg Police Chief Ernest Martineau speaks to students at Fitchburg State University on Tuesday, Feb. 7.

Students eligible to work city traffic details

Police program students could earn \$53 per hour

By **Matthew Bruun**
Fitchburg State University

FITCHBURG » Police Chief Ernest Martineau addressed students in Fitchburg State University's police program on Tuesday afternoon, saluting their commitment to joining a vital profession. And he offered them a chance to make some money along the way.

Martineau invited the students to apply for his department's new civilian traffic control specialist positions, which will pay \$53 an hour to staff road details.

Demand for such positions has exceeded the department's capacity to fill them, the chief said, explaining many details that went unfilled last year.

Opening the opportunity for civilians — including police students — should fill that gap.

"I think a police officer or aspiring peace officer brings a lot to the table," Martineau told the students. "What you're going to learn as future police officers is endless. You're going to learn about crisis intervention, and you're going to learn how to de-escalate a situation. Those are skills you can't put a dollar value on. You're going to be learning these skills before you put on the uniform."

Students in Fitchburg State's police program complete bachelor's and master's degrees in criminal justice and full certification to serve municipal police

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Police

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departments in Massachusetts and other states within five years. It is believed to be the first program of its kind in the nation, the majority of whose graduates have job offers in hand before graduation.

Martineau recalled the origins of the program and the promise of a new approach to police training.

"This vision of the future of policing is what's right in front of me right now: the best and the brightest," Martineau said. "I think you're entering into the finest career you can experience."

"I am thrilled that the police students are being

given this opportunity to work for Chief Martineau out in the Fitchburg community," said Fitchburg State Police Academy Director Lisa Lane McCarty. "One of the goals of our program is to provide more in the four years we have these police students; more education, more training, more job related skill development, more real life experience. These Civilian Traffic Control positions will give them a glimpse into the policing profession while also allowing them to interact with and assist members of their community."

State Rep. Michael Kushmerek also attended the police program meeting to speak with students about his own path and to commend them for their inter-

est in the profession, as well as lauding the Fitchburg Police Department for its ongoing support of the program and its graduates.

"You are truly the future of law enforcement, and the envy of every other city and town in the Commonwealth," he said.

Fitchburg Police Officer Ryan Kreidler, a recent Fitchburg State graduate and a member of the university police program's training staff, encouraged the students to take advantage of the opportunity presented by the chief.

"You're going to be in the public eye, and you're going to learn how to interact with people, with contractors and emergency medical technicians," Officer Kreidler said.



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FITCHBURG STATE

Nursing students receive their white coats

By Matthew Bruun

Fitchburg State University

FITCHBURG » Sophomore nursing students at Fitchburg State University enjoyed the ceremonial launch of their clinical experiences at the second annual White Coat Ceremony on Jan. 19.

Professor Tara Mariolis, chair of the Nursing Department, said the ceremony signifies a pivotal transition in the lives of the students.

"Students, today you will take an oath to compassionate patient care," Mariolis said. "You join a long line of nurses who have made the commitment to put the patient first as they provide holistic, humanistic and patient-centered care."

It also signifies the nursing faculty's commitment to support and mentor each of you as you embark on this next phase of your education."

FSU President Richard Lapidus spoke about the

nursing students' place in Fitchburg State's history.

"For more than six decades, Fitchburg State has prepared qualified and committed nurses to serve their communities in health care settings across the state, the nation, and the world," Lapidus told the students. "That history now includes all of you, who embody the values of service, dedication, and excellence that have defined our nursing graduates."

Dean of Health and Natural Sciences Jennifer Hanselman also addressed the students, thanking them for the commitment to their future patients they are making through their studies.

"By choosing this program of study, you are showing that you are willing to challenge yourselves so that you may best serve others in your communities," Hanselman said. "Thank you, for your demonstrated commitment

to the nursing mission of serving the whole patient, focusing on their physical, social, and behavioral needs. As nurses, you tend to the medical conditions of those in your care with an added level of personal warmth and attention that will play no less of a role in the successful outcomes of your interactions."

Fitchburg State junior Madison Waterson of West Boylston offered the student address, reflecting on being in her peers' position a year ago.

"The white coat you are receiving symbolizes your entry into clinical practice," Waterson said. "Your hard work, late night study sessions, and passion for this field has paid off. You have spent the past semester studying nursing history, how to conduct a head to toe assessment, and significance of the beloved fluid and electrolyte balance, just to name a few.

"Until now, you have

been surrounded by the four walls of a classroom or have tuned in virtually to a zoom meeting," Waterson continued. "Now it's time for you to apply these concepts to the real world. This will transform what you have already learned into something tangible, that you will be able to see for yourselves. This next semester will provide many of you with your first patient encounters."

The following nursing students received white coats at the ceremony:

Ryan Aker of Templeton;
Maryam Ashraf of Fitchburg;
Vivica Banks of Springfield;
Li Batista-Lin of Winchendon;
Macey Bridge of Fitchburg;
Caroline Doherty of Worcester;
Emily Doran of Lunenburg;
Jocelyn Dunn of Braintree;



COURTESY FITCHBURG STATE UNIVERSITY

Fitchburg State University held its second annual White Coat Ceremony on Jan. 19 as sophomore nursing students got ready to start their clinical experiences.

Kirsten Figueiredo of Londonderry, N.H.;
Michelle Flores of Framingham;
Elizabeth Gianni of Wrentham;
Oliver Ginnett of Glastonbury, Conn.;
Kyla Guertin of Fitchburg;
Caroline Hamel of Westborough;
Ava Hannon of Marlborough;
Stephanie Hart of Shirley;
Rachelle Keegan of Southborough;
Nicholas Lafleur of Fitchburg;
Lindsey Lafrance of Fitchburg;

Matthew Landadio of Sterling;
Maria Martins of Framingham;
Kalleigh Murphy of Canton;
Kimberley Norris of Auburn;
Lisette Ortega of Lynn;
Kassandra Patch of Barre;
Sabrina Patch of Barre;
Lauren Serratore of Winchendon;
Natalie Smith of Lunenburg;
Brooke Sullivan of East Bridgewater;
Hana Valikangas of Ashby;
Willow Wildman-Lyon of Shutesbury

Tuesday, February 14, 2023 » MORE AT [FACEBOOK.COM/SENTINELANDENTERPRISE](https://www.facebook.com/sentinelandenterpriserri) AND [TWITTER.COM/SENTANDENT](https://twitter.com/sentandent)[sentinelandenterpriserri.com](https://www.sentinelandenterpriserri.com)

CONGRESS

Lawmakers secure omnibus funds

Fitchburg, Leominster, Gardner projects awarded over \$7 million

By **Shane Rhodes**
shrhodes@townhall.com

U.S. Sens. Ed Markey and Elizabeth Warren, along with U.S. Reps. Lori Trahan, Jim McGovern and Richard Neal are touting successful efforts to secure federal funding for a number of community-based projects across the state in December's end-of-year omnibus spending package.

In a press release, the lawmakers said they had secured over \$20 million for 16 projects across the state, with more than \$7 million directed toward projects in Fitchburg, Leominster and Gardner. Markey said the projects existed "at the forefront" of efforts to promote "health, environmental, and economic justice across our Commonwealth."

"These projects will use federal dollars to add beds and improve systems at regional hospital campuses, promote educational resources and programming for immigrant communities, and enhance critical water infrastructure for our cities and towns in Central Massachusetts," he said.

Funding in Fitchburg included \$450,000 for HealthAlliance-Clinton Hospital's Fitchburg Campus to acquire and install a digital breast tomosynthesis that will expand access to life-saving screenings. Additionally, \$2 million was dedicated to Fitchburg

State University's Theater Block Revitalization Project to build a learning laboratory and black box theater to strengthen the city's cultural and educational infrastructure.

Community Health Connections was awarded \$2.5 million. CHC is a federally qualified health center that has served the low-income, underinsured, uninsured, publicly housed and homeless populations of Fitchburg, Leominster and other nearby communities for more than 20 years. The funds will be used to establish an 8,000-square-foot facility to meet the growing need of mental and behavioral health services for children, including outpatient therapy services, psychiatry, in-school therapy, therapeutic case management, peer mentoring and parenting classes.

North Star of Leominster was awarded \$1 million to develop 15 units of affordable housing, while an additional \$1 million was awarded to the city of Gardner to replace a 141-year-old water transmission main line and maintain the public health and safety of residents.

Trahan celebrated the work of the quintet and said "delivering for our state and our communities" has always been her "top priority." Warren stressed the importance of these projects to the region while McGovern and Neal said these



ALAN ARSENAULT — SENTINEL & ENTERPRISE

U.S. Rep. Jim McGovern speaks at the Montachusett MLK Coalition's 24th Annual Celebration on Monday, Jan. 16, 2023, at the Fitchburg Senior Center.

projects "will real change" and "undoubtedly go a long way" in their respective communities.

"I'm proud of all that the Massachusetts delegation has achieved together in securing funding that will make the Commonwealth an even better place to call home," Trahan said.

"Federal investments like these will help fortify our aging water infra-

structure, provide critical resources for immigrants and veterans, and advance health equity across this region," Warren said. "I'll keep pushing to ensure the federal government is a strong partner to communities across the Commonwealth."

"These projects will effect real change, like expanding patient bed access and making our health system

more equitable," McGovern said in the press release. "For me, public service has always been about listening to and helping people, and after working with so many community leaders to move these projects forward, I'm proud we are delivering results and I look forward to seeing the impact these investments have on the Second District."

"The more than \$20 mil-

lion in federal funding secured for central Massachusetts will undoubtedly go a long way in making many of these long-awaited projects a reality," Neal said. "Congress has the fundamental responsibility to oversee the expenditure of the public purse, and I firmly believe that these projects are worthwhile investments for the people of central Massachusetts."

Friday, March 10, 2023 » MORE AT FACEBOOK.COM/SENTINELANDENTERPRISE AND TWITTER.COM/SENTANDENT

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FITCHBURG STATE

Learn about authentic Italy

'Made in Italy' series continues at Fitchburg State on March 16

By Matthew Bruun
Fitchburg State University

FITCHBURG » The Center for Italian Culture at Fitchburg State University continues its series on the "Made in Italy" brand this month with events exploring Italian fashion and a deeper look at the nature of "authenticity" itself.

"Made in Italy" is a merchandise mark that developed in the course of the 20th century to indicate that a product was completely designed, manufactured and packaged in Italy. It is one of the most well-recognized "brands" in the world. Throughout the 2022-23 academic year, the Center for Italian Culture is exploring the history of this merchandise mark, the industries and personalities that have driven it, its worldwide

cultural impact, and its future, through a series of events including dinners, films and lectures.

The Spring programming continues at 3:30 p.m. Thursday, March 16 with a screening of the documentary film Stracci in Ellis White Lecture Hall in Hammond Hall. Admission is free and open to the public.

The documentary discusses the sustainability of fashion by looking at it through the eyes of those who have always recycled used clothes and transformed them into raw materials.

A journey that starts from Prato, the world capital of recycled wool, and goes around the world, to discover the impact on the planet of the excessive consumption to which the world of fashion has edu-

cated us.

Following the screening, Associate Professor Kevin McCarthy of the Communications Media Department will facilitate a virtual question and answer session with Stracci director Tommaso Santi and his co-screenwriter Silvia Gambi.

The series continues at 3:30 p.m. Thursday, March 30 when Professor Elizabeth Krause from the Department of Anthropology at UMass Amherst presents a talk entitled "What's Authentic? Uncommon Lessons from Made in Italy" in Ellis White Lecture Hall in Hammond Hall. Professor Krause's presentation will draw on ethnographic research in the Made in Italy arena across two different sectors — slow figs and fast fashion — to the-

orize authenticity. Admission is free and open to the public.

In April, the university will welcome Fred Plotkin, co-author of the just-published Rick Steves' Italy for Food Lovers, for a guided tasting of classic Italian cheeses entitled "Formaggio Formidabile." His talk will discuss six Italian cheeses, their history and usage, and how to correctly taste them for maximum pleasure. Ideal wine pairing and sweet or savory accompaniments and a delicious Italian dessert will complete the occasions. Additional details, including ticketing information, will be posted soon.

To learn more about the series and find out about upcoming events visit fitchburgstate.edu/made-in-italy.

What's Authentic?
Uncommon Lessons from

MADE IN ITALY

by Dr. Elizabeth Krause



Thurs., March 30 | 3:30 PM
ELLIS WHITE LECTURE HALL
HAMMOND HALL

This talk will draw on ethnographic research in the Made in Italy arena across two different sectors—slow figs and fast fashion—to theorize authenticity.

Throughout the 2022-23 academic year, the Center for Italian Culture will present a series of programs developed around the theme "Made in Italy."

from fashion to sports cars to the cuisine, the programs will spotlight the enduring impact and global reach of Italian-made products.

SCAN FOR MORE INFO
OR VISIT:
fitchburgstate.edu/made-in-italy



FITCHBURG STATE UNIVERSITY
CENTER FOR ITALIAN CULTURE

COURTESY FITCHBURG STATE

On Thursday, March 30, Fitchburg State Professor Elizabeth Krause will explore slow figs and fast fashion, theorizing authenticity in Italy.

FITCHBURG STATE

Community Read of 'Born a Crime' continues today

Screening, discussion to be held on 'District 9' film

By Matthew Bruun

Fitchburg State University

FITCHBURG » The yearlong Community Read of comedian Trevor Noah's celebrated memoir "Born a Crime" continues with a screening of the allegorical science fiction adventure film at 6 p.m., Thursday.

The screening will be held in Ellis White Lecture Hall in Hammond Hall, 160 Pearl St. Admission is free and open to the public.

Directed by Neill Blomkamp, the multiple Oscar-nominated "District 9" is set in South Africa and explores themes of apartheid and discrimination that are

also central to Noah's memoir.

The screening will be followed by a discussion moderated by Professor Kevin McCarthy from the university's Communications Media Department.

The Community Read's spring events also include "Stand Up Nation: Humor



Blomkamp

Fitchburg State's English Studies Department and University of Wisconsin-Platteville Associate Profes-

and Identity in Multiethnic America," a virtual conversation with Associate Professor DeMisty Bellinger-Delfeld from

sor David Gillota. The online event will be held at 3:30 p.m. Thursday, March 16. Attendees are asked to register online via the Community Read website.

Gillota teaches courses in film, American literature, and composition. He is the author of *Ethnic Humor in Multiethnic America* (Rutgers University Press, 2013) and is the associate editor at *Studies in American Humor*.

Bellinger is the author of the novel *New to Liberty* and the poetry collections *Rubbing Elbows* and *Peculiar Heritage*. She teaches creative writing at Fitchburg State and serves on the editorial boards of the *Prairie Schooner*, *Porcupine Literary*, *Malarkey Books*, and *West Trestle Review*.

Learn more about the Community Read at fitchburgcommunityread.com.

FITCHBURG STATE



PHOTO BY CHARLES SYKES — INVISION/AP, FILE

FILE — In this May 1, 2017 file photo, Trevor Noah attends The Metropolitan Museum of Art's Costume Institute benefit gala in New York. Noah's memoir "Born a Crime" has won the Thurber Prize for American Humor. Prize officials made the announcement Monday night.

Community Read continues Thursday

By **Matthew Bruun**
Fitchburg State University

FITCHBURG » Fitchburg State University's yearlong Community Read of Trevor Noah's celebrated memoir *Born a Crime* continues this month with a virtual presentation about humor and identity in multiethnic America.

The online event will be held at 3:30 p.m. Thursday, March 16. Attendees are asked to register online via

the Community Read website.

"Stand Up Nation: Humor and Identity in Multiethnic America" will feature Associate Professor DeMisty Bellinger-Delfeld from Fitchburg State's English Studies Department and University of Wisconsin-Platteville Associate Professor David Gillota.

Gillota teaches courses in film, American literature, and composition. He is the

author of *Ethnic Humor in Multiethnic America* (Rutgers University Press, 2013) and is the associate editor at *Studies in American Humor*.

Bellinger is the author of the novel *New to Liberty* and the poetry collections *Rubbing Elbows and Peculiar Heritage*. She teaches creative writing at Fitchburg State and serves on the editorial boards of the *Prairie Schooner*, *Porcupine Literary*, *Malarkey Books*, and

West Trestle Review.

The programs will continue at 10 a.m. Monday, March 20 with a Community Read Book Club Brunch at the Lunenburg Adult Activity Center at the historic Eagle House, 25 Memorial Drive. Brunch will be provided by the Eagle House Supporters, Inc. To reserve a place, please call 978-582-4166.

Learn more about the Community Read at fitchburgcommunityread.com.