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FITCHBURG STATE UNIVERSITY

THE POTENTIAL TO BE GREAT'

Nursing, Gaming programs to benefit from AR simulation tech



COURTESY FITCHBURG STATE UNIVERSITY

Fitchburg State Nursing student Kaleigh Visbaras uses an AR headset from Gig XR, who created a holographic healthcare training platform wherein students and faculty may interact with lifelike virtual patients in augmented reality.

Submitted Article

FITCHBURG » Nursing students at Fitchburg State University will benefit from cutting edge technology and next-level simulations thanks to generous grants from the Elaine Nicpon Marieb Charitable Foundation and the George

The grants will fund wearable technology to let students and instructors utilize the latest augmented reality software as well as stipends for nursing and game design students to create and deploy new scenarios for nurses in training.

"This really is cutting edge," said Associate Professor Deborah Benes, chair of Fitchburg State's Nursing Department. "We're giving our students the opportunity to work with equipment they never would have seen before that's being used in the workforce right now.'

The Marieb Foundation was formed by Fitchburg State graduate Elaine (Nicpon) Marieb from the Class of 1984, a nurse turned textbook author. Her nursing-focused text on anatomy and physi-

ology remains a key volume in the field, according to Professor Benes.

With the grant funds, Fitchburg State has invested in technology from Gig XR, creators of a holographic healthcare training platform wherein students and faculty may interact with lifelike virtual patients in augmented reality. Wearing special headsets, the students can see and interact with virtual patients in the classroom or simulation lab, as well as analyze anatomy and physiology.

"Elaine Marieb's emphasis as an educator and author was innovation, she continually strived to improve the learning experience and to approach nursing education from a student's perspective," said Martin Wasmer, chair of the Marieb Foundation.

Benes adds, "I think that's what keeps her work so relevant. We have to keep growing and changing."

The George I. Alden Trust has also been a foundational partner in Fitchburg State's commitment to ensure its nursing students graduate career-ready. The latest grant, supporting the investment in virtual and augmented

SIMULATION » PAGE 8



Nursing student Ryan Aker explores the GigX smartphone app used in conjunction with augmented reality simulation technology that will be used by Fitchburg State University students in the future.



Wearing an AG headset, Fitchburg State Nursing student Ryan Aker will be among those, including fellow Nursing student Kaleigh Visbaras, working with game design students to design simulations that will be used by future students.

Simulation

FROM PAGE 1

reality technology, is the second such funding from the Alden Trust dedicated to excellence in nursing at Fitchburg State. The grants recognize the university's regional role as a powerful driver of workforce development.

A team from Gig XR recently came to campus to begin training students and staff on the technology and its potential. Nursing students Kaleigh Visbaras and Ryan Aker will be among those working with game design student James Livingstone to design simulations that will be used by future students. The students will be paid for their contributions through the Marieb Foundation grant.

Visbaras, a senior from Somerset, said her first reaction upon trying out the headsets was envy.

"I am so jealous of the nursing students who will be here next year, and beyond," she said. "It will be so helpful for students. There are so many options that GigXR will help you explore.'

Visbaras said she found the augmented reality interface very intuitive to use, and predicts her fellow students will quickly get accustomed to the technology and use it to accelerate their learning and understanding.

"We all learn in different tional student, who came ways," she said. "This will to Fitchburg State after 10



COURTESY FITCHBURG STATE UNIVERSITY

Working with Nursing students to design simulated learning tools for use by students, Fitchburg State University Gaming Design student James Livingstone attends a training session to become acquainted with the augmented reality tech from GigXR.

really help visual learners. In a scenario, when you figure out what's wrong is the best feeling in the world. You're thinking on the spot and using abilities you didn't think you had. It's like a mystery game, and this will be great for students just building that foundation."

Aker, a senior from Templeton, agreed. "As a visual learner, this technology would have absolutely enhanced my learning as a student tenfold," he said. "This technology has the potential to be great for students, and for patients.

Aker is a non-tradi-

years in the Army. He began his medical training in the military, and looks forward to completing his bachelor's degree in nursing this semester. "It's one of those careers where you can do so many different things, from critical care to mental health. And there are always job opportunities.

Visbaras and Aker are hopeful they can lend their insights to the creation of meaningful simulations and scenarios that students can experience using the Gig XR technology.

Livingstone hopes so, too. The Raynham native is spending his capstone internship embedded in

the Nursing Department, where he will be working with Visbaras, Aker and others to create simulations using the Gig XR platform.

"I'm used to working in teams with other game design students, where this will be more client-driven," said Livingstone, who has worked during the early weeks of the semester helping to get his collaborators proficient in the tools they will be using.

He is confident the interdisciplinary skills he is developing will be helpful when he is pursuing professional opportunities after graduation.

-Fitchburg State University

Saturday, February 24, 2024

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'AMAZING AND HARDWORKING'

Fitchburg State hosts HS honors students for writing retreat

Submitted Article

FITCHBURG » February school vacation this year came with frigid temperatures, but that was of no concern to one group of students determined to stay busy during their week off.

As part of a special program, Fitchburg State University invited a dozen High School juniors to a writing retreat on campus during the school break. The students included members of the Fitchburg student staff of peer tutors, in-High Honors Academy, through cluding Fitchburg High Honors which they gain special access to Academy graduates.

their hometown university and its resources.

With English teacher Kathleen Hytinen helping organize the ex-Hytinen's Advanced Placement personal time to hone their writing skills.

In addition to the time spent refining their own work, the students critiqued their peers' work and availed themselves of the university's writing center and its

"It's a great opportunity to get them out of their everyday classroom environment and come together to help each other out," cursion, the students, enrolled in Hytinen said. "These students are amazing and hardworking, and seminar, came to campus on their I'm grateful for how much I've seen them grow academically in these last two years."

> The visiting students said their time on campus was helpful.

> "It's been very beneficial for my writing process," said Carissa Triolo. "It's good to be in a new environment, and the peer tutors from Fitchburg State were very helpful."

WRITERS » PAGE 8



Fitchburg High School juniors help critique each other's work with the help of educators at Fitchburg State University during a writing retreat over February vacation.

COURTESY FITCHBURG STATE UNIVERSITY

Writers

FROM PAGE 1

Triolo said she plans to major in English when she begins her college career.

Naika Jean, who is interested in studying prelaw or political science in college, also enjoyed the opportunity to focus on her writing during the trip to Fitchburg State. "There's definitely value in stepping into a new environment," Jean said.

Asa Ovwech said the seminar gave him valuable insights into his approach to writing. "I think this process has been very introspective in how I operate as a writer," said Oywech, who is also looking at studying English with a minor in international affairs or sociology when he goes to college.

The students said they have enjoyed the Early College courses they have taken at Fitchburg State, through which they are earning college credit while honing their academic skills. They also didn't balk at coming to campus on what could have been just another week off.



Professor Catherine Buell, from the Fitchburg State Mathematics Department, oversees the University's honors program and helped organize the retreat this week.

"This is definitely a rethan sleeping in or watching TV."

university's dining com-

Fitchburg State and sponsible use of my time," Fitchburg High School first Oywech said. "It's better signed the Honors Compact in 2013, an agreement that gives students enrolled concluded their visit to Honors Academy priority campus with lunch in the admission to the university as well as access to university courses, facilities and

scholarships.

The program was a collaboration between the FHS Honors Academy, Fitchburg State Early Col-The visiting students at Fitchburg High School's lege and Dual Enrollment, and the Fitchburg State Honors Program.

> - Fitchburg State University

Friday, March 15, 2024

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FITCHBURG STATE UNIVERSITY

FSU panel to discuss use of psychedelics

Talk scheduled for Tuesday afternoon, open to public

Submitted Article

FITCHBURG » The medical, scientific and social aspects of psychedelic-assisted therapy will be discussed when Fitchburg State University hosts a panel discussion of experts from medicine, neuroscience and clinical practice at 3:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 19 at the main lounge of Hammond Hall.

and open to the public.

cybin and MDMA, are promising treatments for mental-health pression, anxiety, and PTSD. The expert panel will discuss psychefuture prospects and challenges.

Admission to the talk is free moderated by Fitchburg State Associate Professor Michael Hove of Psychedelics, such as psilo- the Psychological Science Department. Panelists will include:

 Yvan Beaussant (MD, MSc, disorders including addiction, de- Harvard Medical School, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute), a hematologist, palliative care physidelic-assisted therapy as well as cian, and clinical investigator, with training in psychedelic re-The panel discussion will be search and therapy. He stud-



Psilocybin mushrooms stand ready for harvest in a "fruiting chamber."

Panel

FROM PAGE 1

MDMA-assisted therapy on depression, pain, and existential distress in patients with serious illness.

ies the effects and mech- LICSW), a therapist, trainer,

cial worker in private pracpsychedelic-assisted psy-review for approval. • Francis Guerriero (MA, chotherapy. He was a therapist on a national study (PhD, McGill University, and non-ordinary states, and its School of Health and anisms of psilocybin- and supervisor, and clinical so- of MDMA-assisted therapy Montreal), a cognitive he has been involved in Natural Sciences.

tice. He trains and super-through therapy by the FDA chedelic science advisor research. vises local clinicians in and currently under FDA to media and nonprofits.

Fascinated by the thera- by the university's Psycho-Alexandre Lehmann peutic potential of music logical Science Department

for PTSD, deemed a break-neuroscientist and a psy-ketamine and psilocybin

The event is sponsored

LISTS > SCHOOLS AND EDUCATION - SUBSCRIBER CONTENT

Largest MBA Programs in Massachusetts

Ranked by Total MBA enrollment

Locally Researched by: Sean McFadden

Mar 06, 2024, 11:20am EST

Information was obtained from participating school representatives. Data is as of Fall 2023. Total enrollment for all MBA programs includes online students.

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	SCHOOL/PRIOR RANK (*UNRANKED IN 2023)/ URL	ADDRESS PHONE	TOTAL MBA ENROLLMENT ↓	NO. OF FULL-TIME MBA STUDENTS	NO. OF PART-TIME MBA STUDENTS	% OF MALE MBA STUDENTS	% OF FEMALE MBA STUDENTS	HEAD OF MBA PROGRAM
0	BOSTON UNIVERSITY (QUESTROM SCHOOL OF BUSINESS) bu.edu/questrom	1 Silber Way, Boston, MA 02215 617-353-9720	2,520	273	2,247	62%	38%	Barb Bickart, Senior associate dean of programs
2	HARVARD BUSINESS SCHOOL hbs.edu	Soldiers Field Road, Boston, MA 02135 617-495-6000	1,953	1,953	N/A	54.5%	45.5%	Matthew Weinzierl, Senior associate dean, chair, MBA program
3	UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST (ISENBERG SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT) isenberg.umass.edu	121 Presidents Drive, Amherst, MA 01003 413-545-5608	1,532	62	1,470	59%	41%	Nikunj Kapadia, Associate dean, graduate programs
4	UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS LOWELL (MANNING SCHOOL OF BUSINESS) uml.edu	Pulichino Tong Business Center, 1 University Ave. Lowell, MA 01854 978-934-2850	1,198	325	873	58%	42%	Michael Famighette, Assistant dean & director of graduate programs
5	FITCHBURG STATE UNIVERSITY fitchburgstate.edu	160 Pearl St., Fitchburg, MA 01420 978-665-3000	1,048	212	836	40%	60%	Beverley Hollingsworth, MBA Program Chair

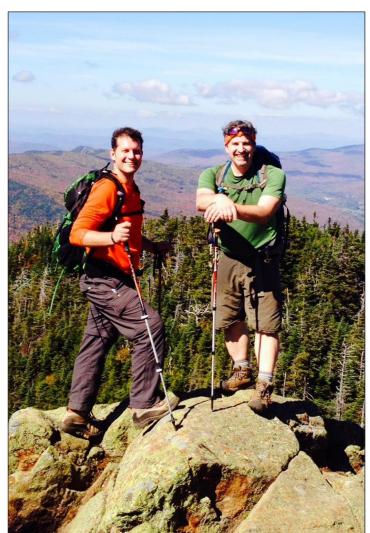
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FITCHBURG STATE UNIVERSITY

A FOCUS ON RELATIONSHIPS



Pictured, from left Fitchburg State graduates, Eric Hanson, Keith Gentili, Keith Rice, and Eric Engler share a Golden Hour moment after summiting Mount Adams (5,799 feet) and Mount Madison (5,366 feet), two of New Hampshire's five highest peaks.



Hiking the mountains of Crawford Notch in late September delivers breathtaking views as the foliage can be peaking. Jason Unger (left), and Keith Gentili take in this scene from Mount Webster.

Local author presents book

By Cheryl A. Cuddahy

Correspondent

 $\textbf{FITCHBURG} \ \textbf{\textit{w}} \ \ \textbf{Fitchburg} \ \ \textbf{State}$ University will continue its Community Read of alumnus Keith Gentili's book "White Mountains State: A Four-Year Journey Hiking and Summiting New Hampshire's 48 Highest Peaks" with a series of events this spring, including a talk by the author himself.

Gentili's book has been described as a down-to-earth story for anyone with an interest in hiking and mountain climbing, highlighting both the trails and challenges of the New Hampshire 48, as well as the deep satisfaction and accomplishment that can result in finishing the list.

The campus will welcome Gentili at 5 p.m. Thursday, March 21, in Hammond Hall, Fitchburg State University, 160 Pearl St. He will be joined by other alumni who are featured in his book during the talk.

The program will begin with a social hour and refreshments before the speaking program begins at 6 p.m.

Gentili started conceptualizing ideas in November 2020 (during the height of COVID)

and worked on a business plan/

story framework all winter, pull-

ing some notes together and so-

liciting opinions. "I secured my book deal in the late spring of 2021 after sending out inquiries to New Hampshire-based publishers," he said. "I really dug in that summer, doing research, and creating the book's structure and chapter template as well as pulling photos together."

In the fall of 2021, Gentili began interviewing his hiking partners, "that was the real heavy lifting," he said with a smile. "Scheduling the interviews, traveling to my hiking partners, taping everything, and then transcribing the tape. But as all the recordings slowly became text on a page, the story really began to develop, and each chapter started to get clearer and clearer as each of my hiking partners shared their mem-

Gentili spent all winter shaping the book, chapter by chapter, and completing his interviews, writing his first chapter in April of 2022, finishing in August 2022. His book was published in November 2022, and has been dedicated, first and foremost, to his hiking partners.

"Throughout the entire process, I was pushing myself to do right by them," he said. "To tell

BOOK » PAGE 8

Wednesday, March 20, 2024 » MORE AT FACEBOOK, COM/SENTINELANDENTERPRISE AND TWITTER, COM/SENTANDENT

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STANLEY CUP CHAMP HEADING TO FITCHBURG

Shawn Thornton to speak at FSU

Former Bruin making appearance at Weston Auditorium

By Nick Mallard

nmallard@sentinelandenterprise.com

FITCHBURG » Shawn Thornton, played on two Stanley Cup-win-team. ning National Hockey League during an appearance at Fitch-

and open to the public.

Toivo Kramer, Samuel Rennick to 2005-06) recording 102 points and Trenton Skaggs, all of whom (42-60-102). are student ambassadors for the university's School of Business the Panthers. Thornton became and Technology as well as memthe former Boston Bruin who bers of the Falcons' ice hockey

teams, will speak about his life hockey for 20 years, concluding can Hockey League games. He is his playing career as a member the only player this century to reburg State University on April 8. of the Panthers on April 8, 2017. Thornton, currently a senior A two-time Stanley Cup chamvice president with the Florida pion (2007, 2011), the native of Panthers, will speak at 7 p.m. at Oshawa, Ontario, appeared in Weston Auditorium, 353 North 705 NHL games with the Pan-St. Admission to the talk is free thers (2014-15 to 2016-17), Boston Bruins (2007-08 to 2013-14), The discussion will be moder- Anaheim Ducks (2006-07) and ated by Fitchburg State students Chicago Blackhawks (2002-03

During his playing career with the only player in professional hockey history to begin his career after expansion and play in over Thornton played professional 700 NHL games and 600 Americord 10 fights, score 10 goals and win the Stanley Cup in the same season.

He founded the Shawn Thornton Foundation in 2013 and serves as its president and director. The Shawn Thornton Foundation is dedicated to helping find cures FSU » PAGE 3



CHARLES KRUPA - THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Former Boston Bruins right wing Shawn Thornton will speak at Fitchburg State University on April 8.

FROM PAGE 1

for diseases close to his son's" golf event and does playing three seasons with

heart, specifically Parkin- charitable work throughout the club over his 20-year sponsored by Fitchburg his foundation, Thornton

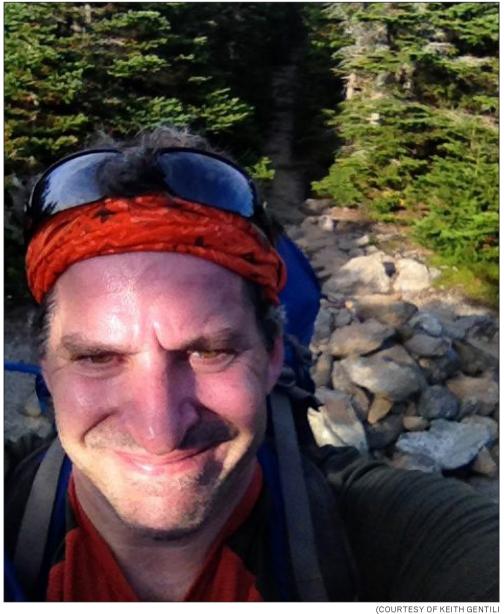
son's and cancer. Through Boston and South Florida.

and Punches for Parkin- staff on June 1, 2017, after lished in 2021.

professional hockey career. Thornton joined the His memoir, "Fighting My dent, Office of the Provost, holds an annual "Pucks Florida Panthers executive Way to the Top," was pub- Office of Student Affairs,

The talk on April 8 is and Technology.

State's Office of the Presiand the School of Business



Climbing from the floor of Carter Notch to the summit of Carter Dome (elevation 4,832 feet) on a hot summer day with an overnight pack can leave folks red faced as it did author — hiker Keith Gentili.

Book

FROM PAGE 1

our story as accurately as I could, based on all of our recollections from these 26 hikes and their planning. It was essentially a promise I made to myself at the beginning, that if they signed on to the project, and they did, I would do everything I could to tell the story openly...warts and all.'

Gentili says he also wanted to tell the story of 26 'hikes gone good', believing that there is a lot of hiking literature about 'hikes gone bad,' including stories of folks lost from our own community, the White Mountains hiking community.

'During both my planning and writing process, this became increasingly important to me as I got deeper and deeper into the project," Gentili added. "I wanted to place an alternative to 'death at elevation' on hiker bookshelves. Give folks a story to read about getting up and down mountains successfully while often spotlighting the things that did go wrong."

However, his most important message to his readers is that he wanted a published account of what it took for a group of local hikers to complete the New Hampshire 48, from start to finish — a record, he says. "While White Mountains

State' is not a guide to the New Hampshire 48, it is certainly our road map. How we did it. From concept to completion including all of our highs and lows, with an emphasis on planning, education, and evolution, said Gentili. "That is why each of my hiking partners' story is told and so much of the book focuses on relationships — the relationships between hiking partners as well as the relationship we each had with the mountains and the 48 in its entirety."

Gentili is also the editor and publisher of the New Boston Beacon, located in New Boston, NH. He was named New Boston Citizen

of the Year 2023, New England Serious Columnist of the Year; three-time New Hampshire Columnist of the Year: New Hampshire Press Association General Excellence Honoree, and New England Press Association Distinguished Newspaper in 2021, 2022, and 2023.

The Community Read is a collaboration between Fitchburg State University, Mount Wachusett Community College, local public libraries, and the surrounding communities.

Its mission is to promote thought-provoking discussions of literature to all audiences. This program is the product of the community, for the community. Its goal is to facilitate a place for insightful discussion, giving members of the community a chance to share their opinions and be heard.

Copies of Gentili's book will be on sale at the event.

For more information on Keith Gentili, you are welcome to visit his Facebook pages whitemountainstate/; NewBostonBeacon/, and keith gentili/.

FITCHBURG STATE UNIVERSITY

FSU GRAD TO COMPETE ON 'THE AMAZING RACE'

Submitted Article

FITCHBURG » Mary Cardona-Foster, a 2018 graduate of Fitchburg State University, will be among the competitors on the upcoming season of the globe-trotting, Emmy Award-winning reality series "The Amazing Race."

Cardona-Foster, a Waltham native who works as a marketing manager, is a longtime fan of reality TV. And "The Amazing Race" was her late mother's favorite television show.

"I applied on a whim, and got a casting call," she said. With her father, Chris Foster, as her teammate, they went through a battery of psychological examinations, vaccinations, and other trials just to qualify to appear on the show.

They were selected as alternates, but Cardona-Foster chose to look at the bright side. "I'm a positive person, so I thought, That's not a no."

They were flown to Los Angeles and stood by for several nights, until they got the call that they were indeed being added to the season's cast of competitors.

Cardona-Foster is forbidden from discussing how she and her father fared on the show - viewers will have to tune in when the season premieres on March 13 but was happy to say it was a meaningful experience. "Doing the show with my dad was very special," she said. "He's always been my biggest supporter."

She returned to the Fitchburg State campus in February to start work with current students in the Communications Media Department. For Professor Randy Howe's class on communicating project design, Cardona-Foster will be serving as the client for whom teams of undergraduate students will be preparing marketing materials and campaigns. Later this semester, she will pick the winning proposal.

She said it was gratifying to be back on campus, where she honed the skills that she uses in her professional life every day. She majored in Communications Media with a concentration in professional communications and a minor in Spanish. As an undergraduate, Cardona-Foster also worked with the Athletics Department and was among 40 students selected from across the country to participate in the NCAA Convention Division III Student Immer-RACE » PAGE 9



COURTESY OF MARY CARDONA-FOSTER

Mary Cardona–Foster of Waltham, a 2018 Fitchburg State University graduate, will compete with her father, Chris Foster, in the upcoming season of the CBS reality show "The Amazing Race."

Race

FROM PAGE 1

sion Program.

"I loved Fitchburg State because I felt like a big fish

appreciated the real-world experiences I had. Now, it's nice to give back to the university with my knowledge and experience."

"The Amazing Race" kicks off Wednesday, March 13 (9:30-11:00 PM, ET/PT) in a small pond," she said. "I on the CBS Television Net-

work, and streaming on Paramount+ (live and on demand for Paramount+ with Showtime subscribers, or on demand for Paramount+ Essential subscribers the day after the episode airs).

—Fitchburg State University

A3 LUGALNEWS

Sunday, March 24, 2024 » MORE AT FACEBOOK.COM/SENTINELANDENTERPRISE AND TWITTER.COM/SENTANDENT

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FITCHBURG STATE UNIVERSITY

Vocal, instrumental ensembles present 'Music Mega-Mix'

Features students, faculty, staff, alumni and community members

Submitted Article

from all the instrumen- to all. tal groups on campus at free concert being held in members. Weston Auditorium.

a showcase of bite-sized fessor Hildur Schilling. performances by its Com- Associate Professor Jonacert Band, Chamber Choir, Chamber Choir and Con-Concert Choir, and Mod-cert Choir, and the Con-Band are conducted by As-Glothlin.

at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 26. The Auditorium is lo-FITCHBURG » The public is cated at 353 North St. and invited to enjoy samplings admission is free and open

The ensembles consist Fitchburg State University of students, alumni, facthis Tuesday evening at a ulty, staff, and community

The Community Orches-The Music Mega-Mix is tra is conducted by Pro-



BEN PRUCHNIE - GETTY IMAGES

munity Orchestra, Con-than Harvey conducts the An orchestra and concert band will play during the March 26 show at Weston Auditorium.

ern Band and will be held cert Band and Modern sistant Professor Amy Mc-

university's music offerings Learn more about the atfitchburgstate.edu/music. sity

-Fitchburg State Univer-

Sunday, March 24, 2024 » MORE AT FACEBOOK, COM/SENTINELANDENTERPRISE AND TWITTER, COM/SENTANDENT

sentinelandenterprise.com

FITCHBURG STATE UNIVERSITY

FSU gears up for New England's largest drag show

Annual Benefit Drag Show, on April 4, running 17 years

Submitted Article

FITCHBURG » The Gav Straight Alliance (GSA) at Fitchburg State University will present its 17th annual Benefit Drag Show at 7 p.m. Thursday, April 4, an event designed to entertain, enlighten, and share a great cultural experience with the community.

The "Dancing Queens" drag show will be held at the Athletics and Recreation Center, 130 North St., Fitchburg. Proceeds from the show will support the LGBTQ Student Scholarship at Fitchburg State. The program is labeled as New England's largest and oldest drag show.

This year's program will feature dancing and cabaret-style performances by 7 stage performers includ-Boston, Jada Pinkette Fox. Abby Cummings, Lady Sabrina and Roxy Brooks,



DANIELLE RAY - SENTINEL & ENTERPRISE

The campus is preparing for the 17th annual Fitchburg State University Drag Show on April 4, 2024. Pictured is Mistress of Ceremonies Raquel Blake during the event last year.

with Raquel Blake to be the the evening.

DJ Scotty P will spin the King. ing Anita Cocktail, Destiny tunes for the show, during which a major announcement will be made. The highly anticipated Drag ate Director of Student De- University

Race, with students from Mistress of Ceremonies for the university, will crown a Drag Queen and a Drag

> "It is a thrill and honor to be able to advise this club for 23 years," said Associ-

velopment Shane Franzen, who has organized the show since its inception. "Their commitment to change, education, and camaraderie is overwhelming. This show is a culmination of a vear's worth of hard work. With the negative rhetoric that the LGBTQ+ community faces every day, this show is such an important way for our students and Fitchburg State Community to combat such hate. We are very excited, ecstatic to be honest, to be able to make a major announcement at this year's show as a way to make change in the lives of our students and the Fitchburg community."

This event is for audiences aged 18 and over. Tickets, at the door, are \$5 for students; \$10 for the public. Doors will open at 6:30 p.m.

-Fitchburg State