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## Enrollment on the rise at Fitchburg State

By Elizabeth Dobbins

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FITCHBURG — When classes started last week, Fitchburg State University welcomed the second largest number of new students in the school's history — evidence of the university's growing appeal says President Richard Lapidus.

"This is becoming a campus I would like to call a destination," he said. "They're coming now more for programs than they did for convenience,

which is something we've been working hard to promote."

The number won't be finalized until October, but about 760 freshmen and 330 transfer students enrolled at Fitchburg State University this school year.

This is on par with fall 2016 numbers when the university welcomed 756 freshmen and 327 transfer students, which stands as the largest number of new students in the school's history.

Lapidus credits unique academic

programs and targeted recruiting as the forces behind the school's increasing enrollment.

The five-year criminal justice program, which began in 2015, has seen a "meteoric" rise in enrollment, he said. The video game design program, started in 2013, is also popular, though capped admission rates means not everyone who applies enrolls. Nursing biology and business continue to be among the university's most popular

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## School seeing a rise in enrollment

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programs, administrators say.

"The campus is looking at programs that we think are needed and unique," Lapidus said. "As students look at the choices across the state ... they're starting to see differences that didn't exist before amongst the institutions."

The incoming class is also diverse, he said, with 37 percent coming from traditionally underrepresented racial and ethnic groups.

"We are more purposefully trying to reach out to these groups and will continue to do so," he said. "Not every student out there can be promoted to and talked to in the same way. We have to better understand the needs of each group."

In effect, this means more Spanish language promotional material, more bilingual hires and connecting with high schools and community organizations.

The university's growing "gravitational pull" brought students from 19 states, including California, and 26 countries, from as far as Benin in Africa, this year.

More students means a "slight" increase in state funding for the university though the mechanism is complicated making an exact number hard to come by, according to Alberto Cardelle, provost and vice president for academic affairs.



Fitchburg State University freshman Nathan Timbro of Middlefield was part of the second largest ever freshman class for the university.

SENTINEL & ENTERPRISE/JOHN LOVE

Lapidus said the school could increase enrollment by several hundred more students before straining the infrastructure. However on campus housing is near 100 percent capacity currently.

"In talking with students more and more of them are seeking a more traditional experience," he said. "While this is still, I suppose fairly stated, a commuter campus it's very close to being at least 50/50."

The school's academic offerings are also increasing, including the launch of two new programs he hopes will draw students' interest.

Fitchburg State University launched a concentration in cyber security, part of the computer science program, and a deaf studies minor this fall.

The university is also starting several new faculty-led programs abroad, including ones in Ghana, Spain and Costa Rica.

With this school year under way, Lapidus is looking toward the next goal.

"I would love to see, in the not too distant future, another 300 to 500 students on campus."

Follow Elizabeth Dobbins on Twitter @DobbinsSentinel

# Fitchburg State University set to kick off year-long Community Read program

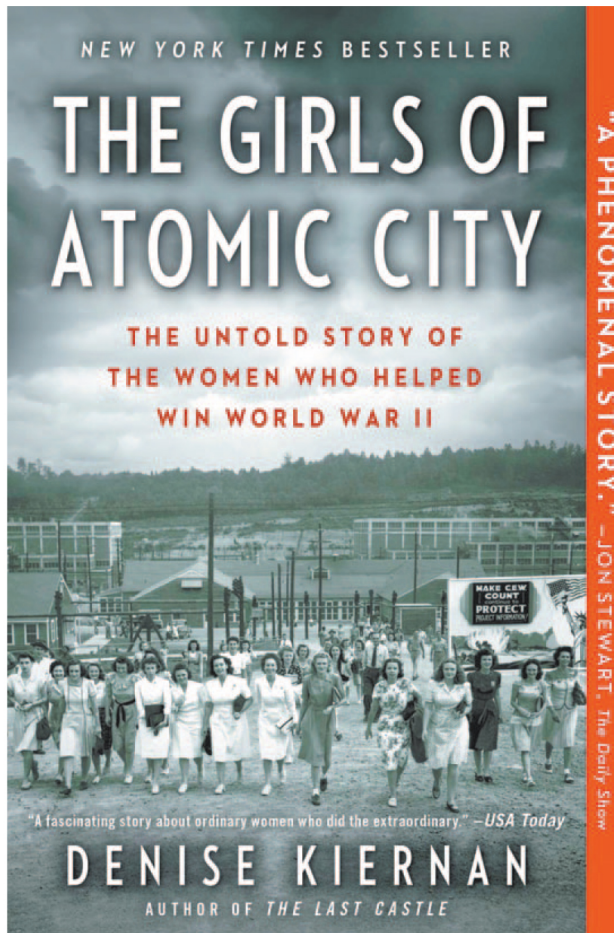
FITCHBURG — Fitchburg State University will kick off its year-long Community Read of “The Girls of Atomic City” by Denise Kiernan with a panel talk on the development, consequences and legacy of the atomic bomb at 3:30 p.m. Wednesday in the Amelia V. Gallucci-Cirio Library in Hammond Hall, 160 Pearl St.

Admission is free and open to the public.

The discussion marks the start of a year-long exploration of the best-selling book that tells the story of the young women of Oak Ridge, Tennessee, who unwittingly played a crucial role in one of the most significant moments in U.S. history: the development of the atomic bomb.

Community Read events will enable a broad examination of Kiernan’s work through lectures, film screenings and discussions over the next several months, culminating in March with a presentation and book signing featuring the author.

The panel talk on Wednesday will include professors Katherine Jewell (economics, history and political science), Eric Budd (economics, history and political science), Elizabeth Gordon (earth and geographic sciences) and Emma Downs (biology/chemistry), along with Dean of Health and Natural Sciences John



Schaumloffel. A question-and-answer session will follow the panelists’ remarks, moderated by librarian Connie Strittmatter.

The events continue at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 26, at the Leominster Public Library, 30 West St., with an intergenerational discussion of the book led by Professor Robert Carr (communications media) and his students. Admission is free. Carr and his students will present another intergenerational

discussion at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 17, at the Fitchburg Public Library, 610 Main St.

The series returns to campus at noon Wednesday, Oct. 25, with a book club-style discussion of the book in the Amelia V. Gallucci-Cirio Library in Hammond Hall, 160 Pearl St. The discussion will be led by librarians Connie Strittmatter and Asher Jackson, along with Dani Langdon from the university’s Center for Professional Studies.

Professor Joseph Moser (English studies) will present a pair of film screenings at 11 a.m. Saturday, Nov. 4, at the Leominster Public Library, 30 West St., Leominster. “Millions Like Us” (1943) explores women’s contributions to the British war effort, while “Raggedy Man” (1981) tells the story of a woman who goes to work as a telephone operator in Texas at the height of the war.

Returning to the main campus, librarian and archivist Asher Jackson will introduce an exhibit entitled “World War II-Era Women of Fitchburg and Leominster” in the Amelia V. Gallucci-Cirio Library in Hammond Hall, 160 Pearl St. at 3:30 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 8. The exhibit in the university archives runs through Friday, March 30.

The Community Read Keynote Address will be given Thursday, March 29, when the campus hosts “The Girls of Atomic City” author Denise Kiernan. Kiernan will attend a reception and book signing at 5:30 p.m. followed by an author talk at 7 p.m., both in the main lounge of Hammond Hall, 160 Pearl St. Admission is free and open to the public.

# Sentinel & Enterprise

SERVING ASHBURNHAM, ASHBY, FITCHBURG, LANCASTER, LEOMINSTER, LUNENBURG, SHIRLEY, TOWNSEND AND WESTMINSTER

FRIDAY, October 6, 2017

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## Concerns over intersection addressed



The intersection of North Street and Pearl Street in front of Hammond Hall.

SENTINEL & ENTERPRISE/JOHN LOVE

### Busy roadway will now feature 4-way stop

By Elizabeth Dobbins

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FITCHBURG — City councilors are rethinking the intersection of Pearl and North streets near Fitchburg State University.

On Tuesday the council approved a petition to change the intersection to a four-way stop in an effort to address the area's high crash rate and increased pedestrian traffic. The petition also requests the addition of blinking lights to indicate crossing pedestrian.

"Fitchburg State University and the city have been working collaboratively in the area to improve the safety of pedestrians,"

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## Changes coming to roadways near Fitchburg State

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said A.J. Tourigny, Mayor Stephen DiNatale's chief of staff.

Currently, drivers on Pearl Street have the right of way, while North Street has stop signs for both directions of traffic. In April, Tighe & Bond — the engineering consulting company that worked on the River and Main Street roundabout — concluded installing stop signs on both roads would improve safety.

The city has previously installed colored crosswalks, raised pedestrian islands and signs, but the crash rate is still above the state and district average, according to the Tighe and Bond study.

The intersection averages 1.46 crashes per every million cars that pass through — the equivalent of just under four crashes a year.

Statewide, the average for intersection without traffic lights is 0.58 crashes per million vehicles.

More pedestrians are using the intersection as well, according to Jay Bry, Vice President of Finance and Administration at Fitchburg

State University.

The school's buildings on Main Street and residence halls like Simonds Hall near the Fire Department Headquarters, mean more college students need to cross Pearl Street. The change will also benefit McKay Arts Academy students and anyone walking downtown, he said.

"As we keep making more commitment to getting people downtown, they have to cross Pearl Street to get there," he said.

Fitchburg State paid for the study, but the city and the university have not decided which will cover the cost of installing the changes, according to Bry and Tourigny.

"I think it's going to be a continued conversation," Tourigny said.

Bry, Tourigny and Ward 4 Councilor Michael Kushmerek jointly proposed the petition.

Bry said Fitchburg State has also been working with the city to address traffic concerns at the intersection of Pearl Hill Road, North Street and John Fitch Highway.

Follow Elizabeth Dobbins on Twitter @DobbinsSentinel.

## 'Rock The Block' at Fitchburg State University



The Fitchburg State University cheerleading team poses for a photo during FSU's annual 'Rock the Block' event on Tuesday. SENTINEL & ENTERPRISE PHOTOS / ASHLEY GREEN



Student Randy Jaquez has some fun with RAD-trained (self-defense) officer Karla St. Laurent during Fitchburg State's 'Rock the Block' community event.

**Check out our photo gallery slide show of the Fitchburg State happening at [www.sentinelandenterprise.com](http://www.sentinelandenterprise.com)**

SEPTEMBER 12, 2017

### Central Mass. universities place high on new ranking



Clark University ranked 81st out of 311 national universities in a new ranking from U.S. News and World Report.

BY ZACHARY COMEAU

Several Central Massachusetts colleges landed in the upper third of a U.S. News and World Report ranking of best colleges in the country.

The lists, released Tuesday, rank colleges in several categories, including best national universities, best liberal arts colleges and best regional universities.

Two Worcester colleges - Worcester Polytechnic Institute and Clark University - landed in the upper third of the best national university rankings, placing 61st and 81st, respectively, out of 311 total schools.

The College of the Holy Cross took the 33rd spot on the list of best liberal arts colleges.

For best regional universities, Assumption College ranked as the best Central Mass. school on the regional university list, taking the 27th spot out of 196 schools. Also on that list were Worcester State University at 116, Framingham State University at 126 and Fitchburg State University at 137.