In brief
Economic Development

UMass Campuses Act as Catalysts for Regional Development

The University's central role is the education of Massachusetts citizens, skilled workers, and leaders in business and government. In addition, our five campuses play an increasingly important and often unique role in helping to revitalize the economy of the state and its diverse regions. In fact, UMass campuses are among the most powerful economic development assets for each of their regions.

The faculty, staff, and students of our campuses work every day to develop the future workforce of the Commonwealth. More than three quarters of our graduates put down roots in Massachusetts upon graduation. Two-thirds stay to live and work in Massachusetts for their entire lives. They form the core of the Massachusetts workforce and help save the state from crippling labor shortages.

The University’s contributions to the state economy extend well beyond workforce needs, however. Each campus makes a critical and distinctive economic contribution to its region.

Our Medical School in Worcester is both the largest employer and the leading source of innovation in central Massachusetts. With a new $100 million research center just opened and more than $100 million of research already under way, UMass Medical is the anchor of the highly successful Massachusetts Biotechnology Park.

UMass Amherst is much more than the largest employer in western Massachusetts. It is the leading provider of research and development in the region, and a promoter of entrepreneurship. UMass Amherst is developing especially strong ties with the city of Springfield, including a new life sciences collaboration with Baystate Medical Center.

The University is fully engaged in the economy, from our capitol to every corner of the state. UMass Boston, the only public university in our largest city, has carved out distinctive roles in helping greater Boston identify and address a range of economic, educational, and environmental needs. UMass Dartmouth is the only university south of Boston, serving Fall River, New Bedford, Cape Cod, and the rest of southeastern Massachusetts. UMass Lowell, already the leading technology university north of Boston, has an extensive record of educational and economic programming throughout the Merrimack Valley, particularly in Lowell and Lawrence.

This issue of In Brief describes these relationships and some of the ways that UMass faculty, staff, and students contribute to regional economic development. We seek your support as we pursue this mission.

Sincerely,

William M. Bulger
President, University of Massachusetts
“We at UMass aspire to provide services that enhance the economy of the region and the Commonwealth.”

DR. AARON LAZARE
CHANCELLOR
UMASS WORCESTER

UMass Medical Center Anchors Biotech Park for Worcester

The UMass Medical Center originally helped in the creation of the Massachusetts Biotechnology Research Park through its 1983 donation of the land on which the park was built. Today, UMass Worcester serves as the university anchor for the park. It has developed countless university/industry relationships that help attract and retain companies in what has become one of the nation's leading centers for biotechnology and medical devices. These relationships ranged from joint research partnerships and commercialization of university technology to joint scientific appointments and sharing of facilities and libraries.

Contact: Richard Stanton, Deputy Chancellor for Finance and Administration (508) 856-5120

UMass Builds Largest Research Center in Central Mass

The recently opened Aaron Lazare Medical Research Building at UMass Worcester is the state's largest research facility west of Route 128. This new 10-story, $100 million, world-class R&D center — financed entirely with private and university funds — is slated to house up to 100 scientists and their staffs when fully occupied. As such, it will surely serve as a magnet for additional scientists, researchers, and life science companies to Worcester and Central Massachusetts in the years ahead.

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Key Medical Center Technology Licensed to Bay State Companies

As evidence of the growing economic importance of UMass Worcester's research program, the University has, in recent years, successfully licensed a number of critical technologies to Bay State companies. These include Biogen (Cambridge), Reprogenesis (Cambridge), Sepracor (Marlboro), Smith & Nephew (Andover), and Zycos (Lexington). According to data produced by the Association of University Technology Managers, UMass Worcester has one of the largest and fastest-growing technology licensing programs in the United States.

Contact: Joseph McGuirl, Executive Director, Office of Commercial Ventures and Intellectual Property (508) 856-1626

Medical School Helps Produce Health-Care Professionals in Worcester

Two UMass Medical School initiatives are helping the regional economy by producing highly trained health-care professionals. The nationally recognized “Worcester Pipeline Collaborative” is a partnership among BASF, Worcester schools, UMass, and other colleges and universities to attract a more diverse pool of the state's students into health-care professions. “Next Step” is another collaboration with area colleges, UMass Amherst, and the Worcester Latino Coalition to help health-care workers without college degrees obtain bachelor's degrees in community health.

Contact: Deborah Harmon Hines, Associate Vice Chancellor for School Services (508) 856-2444
Regional Technology Alliance Takes Root in Western Mass
The UMass Amherst–sponsored Regional Technology Alliance (RTA) is bringing Western Massachusetts companies and their technologies together with University research in two broad networks for regional synergy and joint product development. The Technology Enterprise Council serves firms in the information technology and telecommunications fields, and the Advanced Materials Network focuses on specialty papers, coatings, adhesives, plastics, and other polymer-based materials. More than 350 individuals from 26 large and small companies in the region are currently participating in these two networks. Created through a $600,000 National Science Foundation grant to UMass Amherst, the industry-led RTA networks are serving as the nerve centers for key technology clusters in the western part of the state.

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UMass Amherst Aids “New England’s Knowledge Corridor”
The Hartford-Springfield Economic Partnership (HSEP), a regional economic development initiative to link western Massachusetts and north-central Connecticut, was formally recognized by both state governors in 2000. HSEP got a boost in 2001 through economic analysis work by the Massachusetts Benchmarks team of Robert Nakosteen in the Isenberg School of Management and Jim Palma of the UMass Donahue Institute, in partnership with economists from UConn and the Connecticut Economic Resource Center. Their study found that if considered as a single economic area, the two-state “knowledge corridor” region would compare far more favorably in metro rankings and could potentially leverage greater infrastructure and human capital investments.

Contact: Jaymie Chernoff, Director, Office of Industry Liaison and Economic Development (413) 545-4516

Mass Ventures Helps High-Tech Firms Obtain Financing
Mass Ventures, the public/private venture development firm established in 1995 with the support of UMass Amherst, is working to increase access to early-stage capital for companies in western Massachusetts. Mass Ventures recently helped a start-up biotechnology instrumentation manufacturer secure $12 million in a private round of financing. Agawam-based Protodyne develops automated genome-based technology for drug discovery. MassVentures assisted Protodyne’s management throughout the process of preparing for the financing round. A key regional partner of UMass Amherst, Mass Ventures helps new businesses commercialize leading-edge technologies and obtain funding by offering a unique combination of venture development services and educational programs. Its presence in the region has in turn induced a number of venture capital firms to invest in regional companies.

Contact: Frederick Byron, Vice Chancellor for Research (413) 545-5270

UMass/Springfield Life Science Alliance in the Formation Stage
Leaders from UMass Amherst and Baystate Medical Center in Springfield are finalizing organizational details for a proposed Pioneer Valley Life Sciences Institute. The planned $92 million project would represent the largest R&D infrastructure investment in western Massachusetts in recent years, capitalizing on a successful Collaborative Biomedical Research Program between the two institutions. When fully complete, the institute will be the home for leading biomedical researchers at new facilities in both Amherst and Springfield.

Contact: Jaymie Chernoff, Director, Office of Industry Liaison and Economic Development (413) 545-4516
Commercial Venture Center Aids Regional Economy
UMass Lowell’s Commercial Venture Development Center follows a unique model for a business incubator. In exchange for a modest fee for use of University facilities and a small equity position in a start-up company, the University offers each company faculty, students, and intellectual support through an entrepreneur-in-residence program. Over the past two years, the center has “graduated” five companies that have moved into surrounding communities. Six new companies are housed in the renovated Wannalancit Mill space on campus. To date, the start-ups have raised more than $45 million in venture capital funding. Two of the companies are spin-offs of intellectual property developed by faculty: AnVil Informatics, a data exploration company for life science industries; and Konarka, a company researching the integration of super-efficient, polymer-based solar panels into a wide variety of products.

Contact: Louis Petrovic, Director, Technology Transfer and Partnering, UMass Lowell (978) 934-2577

Lowell Customizes On-Site Corporate Education
Corporations in the region have benefited from on-site and on-line education programs directed by UMass Lowell’s Office of Continuing Studies and Corporate Education (CSCE). Providing customized degree and certificate programs, Lowell delivers education to more than 1800 employees at corporate sites, including Lucent, Analog Devices, M/A-COM, Avici Systems, and Liquid Metronics, Inc. Focusing on signature areas — information technology, computer science, manufacturing technology, management, and plastics engineering technology — CSCE works with corporate liaisons to identify needs and create content that is tailored to each company. For example, information technology and engineering technology certificate programs were developed with Analog Devices and other companies. In the past year, on-site services for students have doubled. These services (advising, registration, and graduation ceremonies) make the educational experience seamless.

Contact: Jacqueline Moloney, Dean of Continuing Studies and Corporate Education (978) 934-2943

Campus Builds Link with Downtown Lowell
Since 1997, UMass Lowell has forged a close partnership with the city of Lowell, the state government, and the federal government, that has resulted in the so-called “miracle mile” of redevelopment from the campus to downtown Lowell. More than $100 million in combined investments account for the $28 million Tsongas Arena (1998), home to UMass Lowell hockey and a minor league hockey team; the $12 million LeLacheur Park (1998), home to UMass Lowell baseball and a Red Sox Single A affiliate, the Spinners; the Lawrence Mills redevelopment project, with $13 million spent to date; and the $19 million Student Recreation Center, to be completed this year. A $5 million Riverwalk connects campus dormitories to the recreation center, stadium, arena, Lawrence Mills, Boardinghouse Park, and downtown.

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“Our ambition is to be a leading model for a technology-oriented public university in the land grant tradition.”

— DR. WILLIAM HOGAN, CHANCELLOR, UMASS LOWELL
UMass Dartmouth Home for SouthCoast Development Partnership
In its role as facilitator of the SouthCoast Development Partnership, UMass Dartmouth has been instrumental in building regional consensus and developing business/university/government relationships. This has emerged as an effective and productive regional partnership in the I-195 corridor among municipalities, the private sector, community-based organizations, elected officials, and the University. Since 1995, Dartmouth’s chancellor, area CEOs, and elected officials have worked cooperatively to implement a regional marketing, promotional, and economic development plan.

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Advanced Manufacturing and Technology Center Opens in Fall River
State, local, and university officials — including Governor Jane Swift and UMass President William Bulger — officially opened the Advanced Technology and Manufacturing Center (ATMC) at the former Kerr Mill site in Fall River last November. The 60,000-square-foot ATMC is a high-technology resource, designed to spawn new technologies and support emerging companies in this historic mill town. UMass Dartmouth will occupy half of the facility and provide a home for a small-business incubator and a variety of cutting-edge research and technology transfer operations. The project was developed with the assistance of MassDevelopment, the state’s quasi-public development agency.

Contact: Roy Miller, Director, ATMC (508) 999-9119

Star Store Campus Re-dedicated in New Bedford
A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held in New Bedford last fall, as government and University officials re-dedicated the Star Store as a new higher-education resource for the “Whaling City.” This 70,000-square-foot facility, located in the city’s historic downtown area, will serve as the home of the university’s visual arts program, as well as a site for community college classrooms. As such, it will bring hundreds of students into the downtown area and serve as a catalyst for continued downtown renewal. It joins the School for Marine Science and Technology (SMAST) on Clark’s Cove in expanding the University’s presence in New Bedford.

Contact: John Laughton, Dean, Visual and Performing Arts (508) 999-8564

UMass Dartmouth Leads Southeastern Massachusetts Estuaries Project
The School for Marine Science and Technology will lead a six-year, $12.5 million research project designed to improve the health of estuaries in southeastern Massachusetts. Through this project, UMass Dartmouth will be undertaking the most comprehensive evaluation ever of the health of the state’s estuaries and making policy and management recommendations to the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection and local officials for the 89 estuaries from Duxbury to Cape Cod.

Contact: Brian Howes, Senior Fellow, School for Marine Science and Technology (508) 999-6316
Environmental Science and Technology Park Under Study
With its acquisition of a historic “Pump House” and nine acres of waterfront land adjacent to its campus, UMass Boston has begun assessing the potential for this building to become the centerpiece of an environmental science and technology park. This study is being undertaken with a $50,000 grant from MassDevelopment, the state’s quasi-public development agency. Concepts being explored include use of the historic structure as a public space dedicated to the harbor clean-up; building a small business incubator for environmental and biotechnology companies, laboratories, and conference facilities; and the development of “green” (environmentally friendly) buildings.

Contact: John Ciccarelli, Assistant to the Chancellor for Economic Development (617) 287-7893

UMass Boston Partners with Metro Planning Council on Economic Development Strategy
UMass Boston has partnered with the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) to update the region’s Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). The CEDS provides a blueprint for the 101 cities and towns in the MAPC service area to support economic development planning and implementation. UMB faculty and staff will update and analyze regional economic data, conduct interviews with key community economic development leaders, and create a strategic plan for the MAPC to assist in moving forward key economic development projects in the region.

Contact: William Brah, Environmental Business and Technology Center (617) 287-7723

UMass Boston Opens Satellite Campus in Plymouth
UMass Boston’s Division of Corporate, Continuing, and Distance Education has recently opened a satellite campus at Cordage Park in Plymouth. The initiative is part of Boston’s expanding effort to meet the workforce needs of the Greater Boston region. Programs in Plymouth will be specifically geared to the professional development needs of public school teachers, local businesspeople, and high-tech professionals seeking to develop new skills. An initial enrollment of about 300 students is projected. UMass Boston also runs off-campus programs in downtown Boston and Westborough.

Contact: Dirk Messelaar, Dean, Corporate, Continuing, and Distance Education (617) 287-7925

UMass Boston to Scope Out Renewable Energy Industry
Continuing its tradition of providing high-quality economic analysis for the Commonwealth, UMass Boston has recently begun an economic analysis and business development needs assessment for the state’s growing renewable energy sector. This project is being sponsored by the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative, through the Massachusetts Renewable Energy Trust (MRET). The study results will be used by MRET to decide how to strengthen the renewable energy sector in the Commonwealth. The project team includes UMass Boston’s David Levy of the School of Management and David Terkla of the Department of Economics, along with Michael Goodman of the UMass Donahue Institute.
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“The University is fully engaged in the economy, from our capitol to every corner of the state. Each campus makes a critical and distinctive contribution to its region.”

— WILLIAM M. BULGER, PRESIDENT
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