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ORSP Newsletter



OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND SPONSORED PROGRAMS

DECEMBER 2008

Venture Development Center nears completion

The former cafeteria in Wheatley Hall is in the final stages of its transformation into the Venture Development Center (VDC), a collaborative and cross-disciplinary research space that will stimulate innovation among students and faculty, and help drive the Massachusetts economy.

The 18,000-square-foot facility, designed by Sasaki Associates, Inc., and built by J & J Contractors, Inc., is outfitted with four wet labs (two with fume hoods, and another two with the option of installing them at a later date), and two dry labs, as well as ten offices, which are expected to be licensed for 18- to 24-month periods.

On the organizational side, the VDC will draw on the combined century-plus of business experience of its staff, including William Brah, assistant vice provost for research and executive director; John Ciccarelli, associate vice chancellor for government relations, public affairs, and economic development; Susan Daudelin, director of industry relations; and Christine DePalma, program director. The team will help entrepreneurs both within and outside the university who are looking to develop a new center, alliance or venture to create a business plan, obtain funding, and make the connections necessary to take an idea from concept to reality.

The Center will also feature space for conferences, presentations, and meetings. Two-thirds of the space will be dedicated to “non-hard sciences,” and the VDC will house a coffee bar, around which Vice Provost for Research Richard Antonak hopes “A-ha!” moments will happen as researchers cross paths in what he envisions as “a home away from home for visionaries.”

“We want to make investments in creative ideas that will build our reputation, which in turn will help us recruit faculty and students,” Brah explained, citing the creation of Google while its founders were at Stanford. “That will endear us to local and federal government officials and improve the standing of the university. I know we’ll have achieved that success when I’m interviewing a prospective psychology professor or student—or the next provost!—and they tell me the reason they want to come to UMass Boston is because of the VDC.”

Applications now available for UMass Boston internal grant programs

Applications and proposal guidelines for the fiscal year 2010 Healey, Public Service, Proposal Development, and Doctoral Dissertation internal grant programs are now available.

Visit the Vice Provost for Research website at www.umb.edu/research/, select the “Opportunities” menu, and then select the “Internal Funding Programs” option. Print copies are also available in the Office of the Vice Provost for Research, located on the 3rd floor of the Quinn Administration Building.

While saving an application to your computer’s hard drive, take a moment to read the story *Internal Grant Competitions Help Cultivate Research Success* and learn how some of your faculty and staff colleagues have benefited from these internal grants.

The submission deadline for the the first three programs is Friday, January 16, 2009, and the deadline for the fourth program (the Doctoral Dissertation) is Friday, May 22, 2009. Questions? Please contact Paul M. Mullane, business manager, Office of the Vice Provost for Research, at 617.287.7879 or paul.mullane@umb.edu.

Compliance Corner

Anonymous versus Confidential

Confusion sometimes exists with respect to classifying data collected on research participants as anonymous or confidential.

Anonymous means that no one, not even the investigator, is able to connect the participant’s responses to his or her identity. **Confidential** means that the investigator (and other members of the research team, if applicable) is able to connect the participant’s responses to his or her identity, but that the information obtained is safeguarded in such a way that participants are not identifiable to anyone else. When possible, every effort should be made to keep data collected on research participants anonymous.

Be sure to use the proper term in research protocols and consent documents.

Obtaining informed consent from human subjects

As you're preparing your application for submission to the UMass Boston Institutional Review Board (IRB), there are some important considerations, as required by federal regulations, that you need to address when obtaining the permission of human subjects to participate in your research project.

The United States Department of Health and Human Services Code of Regulations, Title 45: Public Welfare, Part 46: Protection of Human Subjects, stipulates: "Informed consent is a process, not just a form. Information must be presented to enable persons to voluntarily decide whether or not to participate as a research subject. It is a fundamental mechanism to ensure respect for persons through provision of thoughtful consent for a voluntary act.

The procedures used in obtaining informed consent should be designed to educate the subject population in terms that they can understand. Therefore, informed consent language and its documentation (especially explanation of the study's purpose, duration, experimental procedures, alternatives, risks, and benefits) must be written in "lay language" (i.e. understandable to the people being asked to participate). The written presentation of information is used to document the basis for consent and for the subjects' future reference. The consent document should be revised when deficiencies are noted or when additional information will improve the consent process."

Tips on informed consent

It is important to remember that informed consent is more than a document; it is an *ongoing process* of collaboration between the research investigator and their research subjects to ensure that subjects understand what they are being asked to do and that they are voluntarily agreeing to do it. The informed consent process is viewed as an educational process whereby *respect for persons* is considered imperative. This ethical principle recognizes the autonomy of individuals to make educated decisions regarding their voluntary participation as research subjects. Thus, the informed consent process should provide prospective research subjects sufficient information about the project, allot a reasonable amount of time to consider the information and ask questions, so they can make a fully informed decision about whether or not to participate in a study.

1 Language used by an investigator to convey information about a study to potential subjects should be conveyed in laymen's terms.

2 Think of the document as a teaching tool, not as a legal document - use of legalese and scientific jargon is not appropriate. Do not use exculpatory language that could suggest

that subjects are in any way waiving their rights. The consent document should be written in the third person.

3 Describe what will be experienced during the course of participation in the study as a research subject. Explain the purpose, procedures, reasonably foreseeable harms, discomforts, inconvenience and/or risks that may be associated with the research project.

4 Describe the potential benefits that society or subjects might gain as a direct result of their participation in the research.

5 Explain in detail how their personal information and identities will be safeguarded. Be sure to use the correct terminology to convey whether the data collected will be confidential or anonymous.

6 Provide names and phone numbers of contact persons who would be knowledgeable to answer questions that subjects may have about the research, their rights as a research subject, and research-related injuries. These three areas must be explicitly stated and addressed in the consent process and documentation. Questions about the research are frequently best answered by the investigator(s). Questions about their rights as a research subject should be directed to the IRB coordinator, at human.subjects@umb.edu.

7 Every consent document must include the following statements: participation is voluntary; the subject has the right not to answer any question; and the subject may withdraw from participation in the study, without penalty, at any time. It is equally important to alert potential subjects to any foreseeable consequences to them should they unilaterally withdraw while dependent on some intervention to maintain normal function.

The UMass Boston IRB provides a Generic Consent Form that takes into account all of the above tips, and is available by visiting www.umb.edu/research/orsp/compliance/irb.html, and selecting "IRB applications and forms."

Questions on and requests for guidance in completing the Informed Consent Form should be directed to Kristen Kenny, IRB coordinator, at 617.287.5374 or kristen.kenny@umb.edu. Other research compliance issues should be directed to Deborah Elek, the university's research compliance manager, at 617.287.5478 or deborah.elek@umb.edu.

(Some of the text that appears in the above story is provided courtesy of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.)

Faculty Profile



Jemadari Kamara, associate professor of Africana studies, College of Liberal Arts, recently was awarded a \$174,763 grant from the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs to support the International Sports Programming Initiative in Senegal.

The correlation between sports programs and youth development has long been known within the U.S. But for developing countries such as Senegal, the benefits of such programs are still being discovered. Charlie Titus, vice chancellor of the Division of Athletics & Recreation, Special Programs and Projects, will serve as the initiative's project director.

To learn more about Kamara's work in Senegal, visit the Research News webpage at www.umb.edu/research/news/resnews.html and select *More than games in Senegal*.

Some recent new awards

Robert Turner (McCormack Graduate School of Policy Studies) has been awarded a \$50,000 two-year grant by The Hyams Foundation, Inc. Hyams' mission is to increase economic and social justice and power within low-income communities in Chelsea and Boston, Massachusetts.

Gary Siperstein (Center for Social Development and Education) has been awarded a \$475,000 grant by Special Olympics, Inc. to support the "The Special Olympics Regional Collaborating Center."

Maxim Olchanyi (Department of Physics) has been awarded a \$429,000 three-year grant by the United States Office of Naval Research to support his research project "Coherence Properties of Strongly Interacting Atomic Vapors in Waveguides."

Lisa Van Thiel (Graduate College of Education) has been awarded a \$60,000 grant by the Massachusetts Department of Secondary and Elementary Schools for the program "Building Careers in Early Education and Care."

Heather McIndoe (McCormack Graduate Schools of Policy Studies) has been awarded a \$18,000 grant by the Boston Foundation for her "Boston Area Nonprofit" study.

Jean Rhodes (Department of Psychology) has been awarded a \$91,000 grant by Big Brothers and Sisters of Canada for the "Development of an Evidenced-Based Mentor Training" program.

Jillian Bennett (Department of Psychology) has been awarded a \$2,000 grant by the Organization for Autism Research for her study "The Impact of Family Resources on the Ability to Access and Receive Early Intensive Specialized Services for Children with Autism in Massachusetts."

Debra Hart (Institute for Community Inclusion) has been awarded a \$1,200,000 three-year grant by the United States Department of Education to support her project "Equity and Excellence: Universal Course Design to Increase Retention and Completion Rates of Community College Students with Disabilities."

Frank Porell (Gerontology Institute) has been awarded a \$118,000 two-year grant by West Virginia University for his project "Understanding the Long-Term Consequences of Injury among Older Adults."

Christa Beranek (Department of Anthropology) has been awarded a \$3,700 grant by the Lexington Historical Society for her "Collections Inventory of the Archaeological Artifacts from Hancock-Clark House, in Lexington, Massachusetts."

Heidi Stanish (Department of Exercise and Health Sciences) has been awarded a \$30,000 grant by the University of Massachusetts Worcester for "Using Community-Based Participatory Research to Design and Pilot a Physical Activity Program."

Patricia Monteith (WUMB Radio) has been awarded an unrestricted \$139,000 community service grant by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

Hannah Sevian (Center for Science and Mathematics in Context) has been awarded a \$150,000 supplemental grant by the National Science Foundation to support the work of the Boston Science Partnership.

Jane Adams (Department of Psychology) has been awarded a \$35,000 grant by the University of California for her project "Neuropsychological Development of Children Prenatally Exposed to Teratogenic Agents."



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Do you have items you would like to submit for possible inclusion in a future newsletter? Please contact Jim Mortenson at james.mortenson@umb.edu.

