
Fitchburg State University Today



Reminder: Winter Commencement this Friday

The university will hold its [Winter Commencement](#) at 4 p.m. Friday, Dec. 20 in the Athletics and Recreation Center, 130 North St. The ceremony will also stream live on Fitchburg Access Television at fatv.org/fsu.

The winter ceremony is a ticketed event. Information on how registered graduates may reserve guest tickets

has sent to their university email addresses.

[Commencement Information](#)

Students create collateral for DA's safe driving campaign

Students in Professor Kyle Moody's (Communications Media) social media campaign class spent the fall semester designing multimedia collateral for the Worcester County District Attorney's public relations campaign to encourage safe driving for mobile phone users.

The experience was life-changing for the students and, according to District Attorney Joseph D. Early Jr., will also make an impact on members of the public who view their work.

"The work you did here is going to save lives," Early told the students when he and members of his team recently visited the class to review their deliverables for the "Eyes Up Phones Down" campaign. "This is the best work we've had from a university for our campaign. It's tremendous, and right to the point."

President Hodge said she was also impressed by the caliber of the students' work.

"I am amazed by the thoughtful and powerful collateral these students created in collaboration with Professor Moody and the clients from the District Attorney's office," Hodge said. "I am grateful to the District Attorney's team for providing our students and faculty the opportunity to engage in such an important, hands-on experience."

[Learn more](#)





Rollstone Bank donates kindness kits to international students

When President Hodge and Rollstone Bank & Trust Chief Operating Officer Mary Beth Jokela met to discuss possible collaborations between their institutions, the conversation turned to the university's growing international student population.

Just this fall, Fitchburg State welcomed more than 70 new international students from 32 countries. Many of the students arrive on campus without some of the personal necessities that they will need as they embark on their experiences in the U.S.

Jokela saw an opportunity for her community to welcome these international guests, and the "kindness kit" initiative was born. Rollstone Bank & Trust customers and employees donated items from personal care products to snack foods, and nearly 30 baskets were recently delivered to the university's Office of international Education.

[Read more](#)



From Fitchburg State Magazine: Timothy Vernon '06

Timothy Vernon '06 is [featured](#) in the latest update to [Fitchburg State Magazine](#). He discusses his journey as a person who is blind from his days first navigating the Fitchburg State campus to his current role in customer service at Eversource, where he has been embraced for his exemplary job performance and advocacy efforts.

"Fitchburg State was tremendous. They were more than willing to do whatever it took to make sure I was successful," he said. "They want students to have that full college experience."

He recalled meeting staff in the Disability Services Office including **Julie Maki** and **Francine Menendez-Aponte**, both of whom are still at the university. "When I knew I needed certain documents, I would take the initiative to reach out to Julie and Fran and say, 'I know that next Tuesday we've got a test; has the professor sent over the test for

you to put in Braille?' It's being able to work together with people to make sure your needs are met."

[Read the article](#)

Research Roundtable returns in January

The next Research Roundtable with the office of [Institutional Research and Planning](#) will take place at 9 a.m. Wednesday, Jan. 8 in SCI 314. This session's paper, entitled "Essay content and style are strongly related to household income and SAT scores: Evidence

from 60,000 undergraduate applications," examines how admissions essays reflect socioeconomic disparities. The paper may be viewed [here](#).

The roundtable is open to all, regardless of participants' level of experience with reading or interpreting scientific papers. Whether you're a seasoned researcher or new to academic literature, your perspective is welcome and valued. While we encourage participants to read the full paper, the minimum recommendation is to review the abstract. Those who plan to attend are asked to [RSVP online](#).

Submissions sought for Salvatore Writing Prize; deadline is Feb. 14

The Arts and Sciences faculty are excited to announce a new literary prize [competition](#) for student writers at Fitchburg State: the R.A. Salvatore Undergraduate Literary Prizes. Open to all undergraduate writers of fiction, creative nonfiction, poetry, game narrative, and script/play at Fitchburg State, the competition will award five \$1,000 prizes to the top submissions in each genre.

Submissions will be anonymized and prize winners will be chosen by a cross-disciplinary faculty committee and announced before the Spring Convocation event. The deadline for submission to the prize competition is **February 14, 2025**.

The prize competition, made possible by the generous support of R.A. Salvatore '81, '91 and Diane Salvatore, is open to creative writing in any genre - fiction, creative nonfiction, poetry, game narrative, and script/play. Some contemporary forms of poetry and prose have critical elements, and the judging of the competition will take this into account. Scholarly or academic papers without any larger creative purpose or scheme are not eligible for this award. Students may submit entries in up to three genres, but only one entry per genre. Undergraduates may submit via this [form](#).

Feel free to reach out to [DeMisty Bellinger-Delfeld](#) (English Studies) with any questions.



Keep up with campus happenings on the Burg Blog

Follow the [Burg Blog](#) for timely updates of campus life.

Among the recent articles and slideshows, see scenes from the open house for the newly reimagined [Herlihy Hall](#); [theater students](#) performing for the university's Board of Trustees; FAB

[activities](#) for the last day of classes; the [ChristmasHanukkahKwanzaKings](#) event at Holmes Dining Commons; the Global Middle Ages literature fair at the Amelia V. Gallucci-Cirio Library; the return of [therapy dogs](#) to Hammond Hall; the end of semester [guitar class](#) performance; and a visit from the [Fitchburg High Honors Academy](#).

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