



Fitchburg State University Today

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Asquino to be awarded President's Medal at commencement

Daniel M. Asquino, president of Mount Wachusett Community College and the longest-serving public higher education president in the state, will be awarded the President's Medal at Fitchburg State's [undergraduate commencement](#) exercises on **Saturday, May 21** on the main quadrangle.

Asquino is retiring this year after a remarkable tenure at the Mount.

"Dan Asquino has been a champion of education and community engagement throughout his distinguished tenure at Mount Wachusett Community College," President Lapidus said. "He has been a loyal partner and generous community servant for decades, giving his time and talent to countless organizations and thousands of students."

Asquino has served as president of Mount Wachusett Community College since August 1987.

Under his leadership, Mount Wachusett has grown exponentially in size, stature and academic services. Enrollment has grown to over 12,000 credit and non-credit students, satellite campuses have been established in Leominster, Fitchburg, and Devens, and the number of academic programs has expanded to over 75 associate degree and certificate options.

During his tenure at MWCC, Asquino has established the college as a state and national leader in the areas of workforce development and economic development; dual enrollment and K-12 partnerships; civic engagement and service learning; veteran services; and renewable energy and sustainability.

Asquino began his career in public higher education in 1971 as assistant to the president of the Massachusetts Board of Regional Community Colleges. He went on to serve as assistant dean of administration at Bristol Community College, and dean of administration and development at Cape Cod Community College before being appointed MWCC's second



Daniel M. Asquino

president.

He is a charter member of the Massachusetts College Success Campaign, The Democracy Commitment, as well as the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment (ACUPCC).

Asquino currently chairs the Massachusetts Community College Council's Labor Relations Committee and Distance Education Committee. In addition, he is a member of the American Association of Community Colleges Commission on Communications and Marketing. He has twice chaired the Massachusetts Committee of Community College Presidents and is a past chair of the College Board's National Community College Advisory Panel. He is a member and past as two-term chair of the New England College Council, and a member of the Massachusetts Campus Compact Executive Board of Directors.

Locally, Asquino serves as an officer and past chair of the United Way of North Central Massachusetts Board of Directors, officer and past chair of the Boys & Girls Club of Fitchburg and Leominster and past chair of Greater Gardner and North Central Massachusetts Chambers of Commerce. He is a member and past chair of the Board of Trustees for Heywood Hospital, and the GFA Supervisory Board.

He is the recipient of many community and national awards, including the Community Leader Award from the UMass Memorial-HealthAlliance Hospital Foundation; the Distinguished Citizen Award from the Nashua Valley Council Boy Scouts of America; the Dr. Robert H. Goldman Community Service Award; the Greater Gardner Chamber of Commerce Citizen of the Year and Community Service Awards; the Nashoba Valley Chamber of Commerce's Leadership Award; the Governor's Pride in Performance Award; Enterprise Bank's Celebration of Excellence Community Service Award; and the National Council for Marketing and Public Relations Pacesetter Award.

Asquino holds a Ph.D. and M.P.A. in Public Administration and Political Science and a B.A. in Economics and Political Science from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst and Southeastern Massachusetts University, now UMass Dartmouth. He has taught public administration at the high school and college levels, including at the baccalaureate, master's and doctoral levels.

The father of four and grandfather of eight, he enjoys spending time with his family, numismatics, music, fitness and reading.

Megan Pierce to be recognized as one of "29 Who Shine"

Megan E. Pierce of Rochester will represent Fitchburg State when the state Department of Higher Education salutes [29 Who Shine](#) on **Monday, May 9** at the Statehouse. The ceremony will pay tribute to one graduating senior from each of the state's 29 campuses of public higher education.

An interdisciplinary studies major, Pierce has been a standout member of the Fitchburg State community since her arrival on campus in 2012. She has used her skills to enhance the quality of life for her fellow students and has been an effective ambassador for her peers with constituencies in the city and beyond.

As a first-year student, Pierce quickly involved herself in student government, serving for four years including service as class president, treasurer, student trustee and ultimately president of the student body.

Honorees at the 29 Who Shine ceremony are allowed to invite a faculty or staff mentor who has been pivotal in their collegiate experience. Pierce selected President Emeritus Robert V. Antonucci as her mentor.

"Dr. Antonucci is the epitome of everything I hope to become one day: intelligent, charismatic, a team player, and a visionary," Pierce said. "Throughout his life he's used all these characteristics to help others. Having him as someone to look up to played a monumental role in my current and future success."

In her interdisciplinary studies with a focus on political science, Pierce endeavored to bring the lessons of the classroom into practice. On campus that translated into service on the university's student leadership initiatives and as an orientation leader for incoming students. She also volunteered her time and energy with the Alternative Spring Break program working for Habitat for Humanity.



Megan Pierce

Beyond the campus, Pierce applied her skills with internships in the state's Executive Office of Education and U.S. Sen. Edward Markey's office. In her final semester on campus, she interned in the office of Fitchburg Mayor Stephen L. DiNatale, again helping to bridge the university and its host city.

She has been a responsible and enthusiastic partner in university-community events such as the political debates Fitchburg State co-sponsors with the local newspaper. She knows the importance of being a positive ambassador for the university with the wider community.

Pierce has been hired as legislative aide for state Rep. Stephan Hay (D-Fitchburg). She plans to continue her studies in public policy at a later date, including the pursuit of a doctorate.

Commonwealth Commitment announced

Gov. Charlie Baker and Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito joined public higher education leaders last month to announce the [Commonwealth Commitment](#), an innovative college affordability and completion plan to help more students achieve the dream of a college degree.

The Commonwealth Commitment commits every public campus to providing 10 percent rebates at the end of each successfully completed semester to qualifying undergraduate students, in addition to the standard MassTransfer tuition waiver received upon entering a four-year institution from a Community College. Students who meet the program requirements will, depending on the transfer pathway they choose, be able to realize an average savings of \$5,090 off the cost of a baccalaureate degree.

This plan is the first agreement of its kind in the nation and was signed by University of Massachusetts President Marty Meehan, Worcester State University President Barry Maloney

and Middlesex Community College President James Mabry, representing the three segments of the public higher education system, at a ceremony held this morning at Middlesex Community College.

As part of the Commonwealth Commitment's goal to increase cost savings and predictability, tuition and mandatory fees will be frozen for program participants as of the date they enter the program. Students will begin their studies at one of the state's 15 community colleges, enrolling in one of 24 Commonwealth Commitment/Mass Transfer Pathways programs that will roll out in fall 2016 (14 programs) and fall 2017 (10 additional programs). They must attend full-time, and must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0. After earning an associate's degree in two and a half years or less, students will transfer to a state university or UMass campus to earn a baccalaureate degree.



At the end of every successfully completed semester, students will earn a 10 percent rebate on tuition and fees, payable in the form of a check, or may opt to receive a voucher to use for books or other education-related expenses. The program does not discount room and board, although students may choose to use their Commonwealth Commitment savings or other resources to offset some of those costs. Students' rebates or vouchers will be calculated based on the total cost of tuition and mandatory fees at the institutions they choose to attend. Additionally, students who enroll in free or reduced cost dual enrollment programs, taking college courses while still in high school, may be able to apply the credits they earn toward their Commonwealth Commitment degrees, thus reducing costs even further.

Additional information is available at www.mass.edu/MAComCom.

Legacy of the "war on terror" to be explored May 2

The legacy of 15 years of a "war on terror" will be explored in a panel discussion at 3:30 p.m. **Monday, May 2** at Ellis White Lecture Hall in Hammond Hall, 160 Pearl St. Admission is free and open to the public.

The topic will be explored by Fitchburg State faculty members Eric Budd (Economics, History and Political Science) and Heather Urbanski (English Studies) with graduate student and veteran

15 Years After Lessons from the "War on Terror"



As we approach the 15th anniversary of 9-11, what lessons have we learned from the "War on Terror?" What is the legacy of this period?

Ross Caputi.

The talk will draw on experts from the campus to introduce a discussion of the lessons and legacy of a war on terror that has helped to shape the country - and the world - for nearly 15 years. The panel will look at the lessons and legacy from multiple perspectives.

Experience a taste of Japan on May 3

Join faculty and students from this spring break's study abroad trip to Tokyo and Kyoto, Japan. Thanks to game design student Sabrina Velez, Holmes Dining Hall will be serving a few Japanese dishes during dinner on **Tuesday, May 3** from 5 to 7 p.m. Students who participated in [the trip](#) will also be showing photos and projects during the meal.



Omaggio Duo performs Wednesday, May 4

Fitchburg State will welcome the Omaggio Duo - featuring cellist Ning Tien and pianist Monica Tessitore - for a free concert at 7:30 p.m. **Wednesday, May 4** in Kent Recital Hall in the Conlon Fine Arts Building, 367 North St.

The performance is sponsored by the university's [Community Music Lesson Program](#), for which Tien is an instructor.

The Omaggio Duo will perform music from four continents, including compositions by Shirish Korde, Bohuslav Martinu, Arvo Part, Astor Piazzolla, Igor Stravinsky, Zhao Zhang and Yan Linda Zheng.

The Community Music Lesson Program offers private and group lessons in voice, guitar, ukulele, banjo, piano, violin, viola, cello, flute, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, flugelhorn, drums, percussion and other instruments. Lessons are offered in 30-, 45- or 60-minute increments for 5-, 10- or 15-week courses. Enrollment is open year-round.



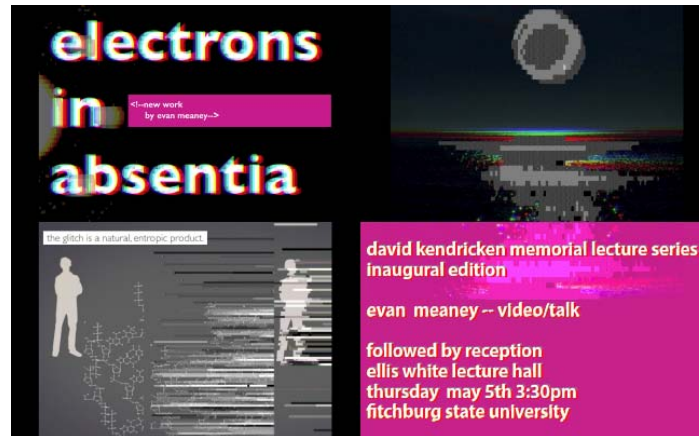
Monica Tessitore and Ning Tien

For additional information, contact the university's Center for Professional Studies at cps@fitchburgstate.edu or 978-665-3636.

Communications Media launches memorial lecture series

The Communications Media Department launches its David Kendrick Memorial Lecture Series this **Thursday, May 5** at 3:30 p.m. in Ellis White Lecture Hall.

The series honors Kendrick, a 2012 alumnus, recalled by the department as an extraordinary individual, whose prodigious energy fueled a boundless curiosity. Foremost among his many passions were film, music, and literature. He had a distinct and singular fascination with wave forms: analog, digital, processed, modulated, distorted, transduced; he dove in and swam in them all. The David Kendrick Memorial Lecture Series will bring to the Fitchburg State University community artists whose work and spirit resonate with Kendrick's legacy.



The inaugural presentation will feature artist and researcher Evan Meaney and "Electrons In Absentia."

Meaney teaches new media practices at the University of South Carolina. His work explores liminalities and glitches of all kinds; equating failing data to ghosts, seances, and archival hauntology. He has been an artist in residence at the Wexner Center for the Arts, a founding member of GLI.TC/H, and a contributor to The Atlantic. More recently, Evan has worked with the super computing team at Oak Ridge National Laboratory on projects made possible through the National Science Foundation. His time-based artwork is available through the Video Data Bank in Chicago.

Choral, instrumental concerts offered in May

Fitchburg State's instrumental and choral ensembles will present their spring concerts in May. Admission is free and open to the public.

The university's jazz and concert band, including jazz and jazz-rock standards, band marches and popular music, will perform at 7:30 p.m. **Thursday, May 5** at Weston Auditorium, 353 North St.

The university's concert choir will perform at 7:30 p.m. **Monday, May 9** at Kent Recital Hall in the Conlon Fine Arts Building, 367 North St.

Celebrations

As the academic year draws to a close, several celebrations are in the works for members of the campus community, past and present. Among them:

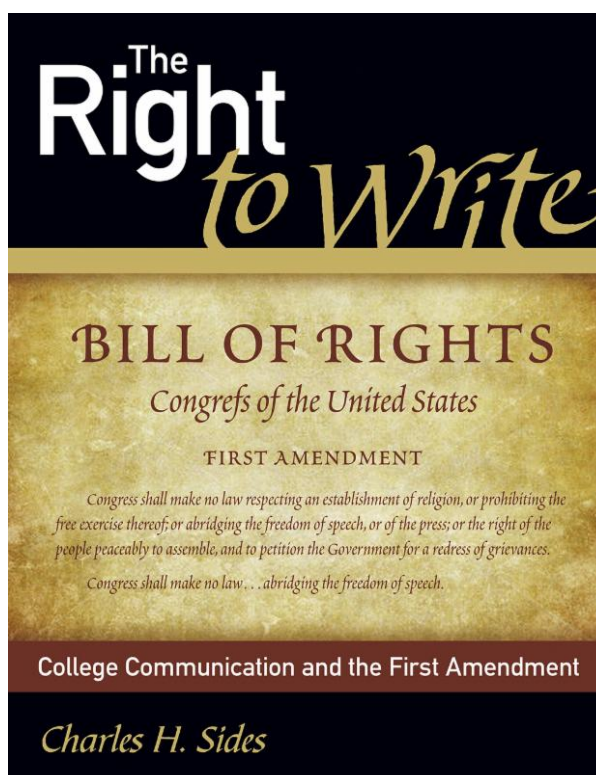
On **Tuesday, May 3**, the Humanities Department will host a farewell gathering for retiring faculty member **Maria Jaramillo**. The gathering will be held at Miller Hall from 2 to 3:30 p.m.

On **Wednesday, May 4**, the Exercise and Sports Science Department will host a farewell gathering for retiring faculty member **David Antaya**. The gathering will be held at Miller Hall from 3 to 5 p.m..

On **Tuesday, May 10**, the Education Department will host a gathering for retiring faculty member **Ronald Colbert**. The gathering will be held at Miller Hall from 3 to 5 p.m.

Faculty Notes

Charles Sides (Communications Media)'s new book *The Right to Write: College Communication and the First Amendment* will be published by Kona Publishing this summer. The First Amendment to the United States Constitution enshrines a right that is unique to free societies—a right to write, speak, and publicly gather as part of an obligation to engage in the *civitas* of a society. *The Right to Write: College Communication and The First Amendment* explores the history of speech freedoms and provides easy-to-apply strategies for students in a wide range of college-level writing courses, supported by challenging case studies (called "Things to Think About, Talk About, Write About") that are based on past and current free expression controversies. Students in courses ranging from first-year writing to advanced writing to introductory professional writing to civic learning and writing-cross-the-curriculum will find themselves enabled to express their ideas with logic and power. Instructors and writing program directors will find a resource that not only teaches their students how to write but also encourages them to embrace the responsibility of expressing themselves well. Written in an accessible style, *The Right to Write* is a book about thinking as much as about writing—an invitation to engage in the "marketplace of ideas."



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