



Office of Community & Government Relations (OCGR) Update

Winter 2019/2020

UMMS Hosts First WooHealth Hackathon



UMMS recently hosted the first WooHealth Hackathon, bringing together students and faculty from nine area colleges and universities to brainstorm innovative solutions for a public health challenge: how to improve physical access to health care.

The Hackathon was coordinated by UMMS along with the Worcester Division of Public Health's Academic Health Collaborative, which includes Assumption College, Becker College, Clark University, the College of the Holy Cross, MCPHS University, Worcester State University (WSU), Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI), Quinsigamond Com-

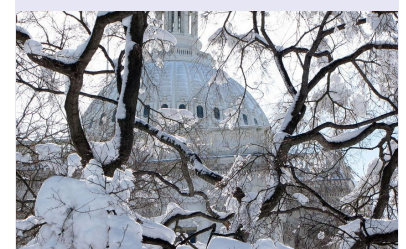
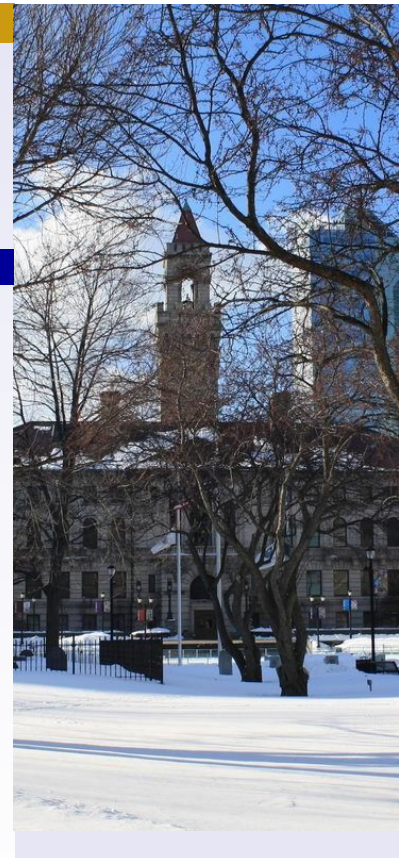
munity College, and UMass Medical School. Approximately 65 students and 50 faculty and community members participated in the two-day event.

Chancellor Michael Collins kicked off the event on Friday evening where participants met with community members to learn more about access challenges such as transportation and the needs of special populations, then formed teams and began to brainstorm and explore potential solutions to the issue of access to care. "I think we've shown over and over again a very small percent of the population uses a very large percentage of the health care dollars," said Chancellor Collins. "Part of that is because they tend to get sicker, because of the lack of access to care."



"This was a tremendous opportunity for the Academic Health Collaborative – Worcester faculty and learners to collaborate across disciplines and campuses. It was exciting to see the creative ideas developed by diverse teams each bringing their skill to the table. We look forward to building this into an annual event for community-engaged service learning," said Melissa Fischer, MD, MEd, professor and associate dean for undergraduate medical education, curriculum innovation and iCELS

Saturday's daylong session included a tour of iCELS to enable participants to learn how simulation could be incorporated into potential solutions to the access issue with teams spending the bulk of the day developing an approach to increasing access to care. Each team presented its proposed approach to the access issue to a panel of judges which included Worcester Commissioner of Health & Human Services Matilde Castiel, MD; WSU Chair of Urban Studies Thomas Conroy; UMMS executive deputy chancellor, provost and dean of the School of Medicine Terence R. Flotte; Fallon Health Chief Medical Officer Carolyn Langer, MD.; and the Coalition for a Healthy Greater Worcester's Liz Myska. The winning team, comprised of students from UMMS, Clark University, WPI and WSU, presented a proposal to enhance access to specialty care for underserved populations in Worcester through development of a website for volunteer clinicians and agencies.



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UMMS Students Meet with Legislators and Policy Makers

UMMS students recently had several opportunities to interact with state and federal elected officials and policy makers. In October, NIH Director Dr. Francis Collins, accompanied by Congressman Jim McGovern, visited UMMS and met with a group of students to discuss research funding. Members of the Massachusetts Legislature’s Joint Committee on Higher Education toured the UMMS campus in November and conducted a student roundtable with students from SOM, GSN and GSBS. UMMS Baystate hosted Congressman Richard Neal as he visited to learn more about the PURCH track, meeting with school and hospital leadership, students and community partners.



Congressman Neal speaks with PURCH Student



Students meet with members of the Joint Committee on Higher Education



NIH Director Dr. Francis Collins with GSBS students



Congressman McGovern greets students on his visit to UMMS

“Interfacing with legislators and other government officials, such as the director of the NIH, affords students the opportunity to present the most pressing and pertinent issues imminently affecting our professional and career development. In return, we hope these leaders keep our perspectives in mind when directing their efforts and dictating policy strategies moving forward.”

*Peter Cruz-Gordillo
MD, PhD student*

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

A flurry of year-end legislative action at the state and federal level impacted several UMMS priority areas, including:

- ◇ **Federal Research Funding** – Three months into the fiscal year, Congress approved a FY20 budget which included an increase for NIH and other federal research agencies. The FY20 NIH appropriation of \$41.7B represents an increase of \$2.6B (6.7%). UMMS had advocated for an increase in CTSA funding within the NIH budget and the final budget includes an increase of \$18.4M (1.4%) over the FY19 spending level.
- ◇ **Patient-Centered Outcome Research Institute (PCORI)** – Congress approved a 10 year extension of PCORI which had been set to sunset this fiscal year. FY20 PCORI funding was set at \$275.5M with increases over the next 9 fiscal years up to \$399M in FY2029.
- ◇ **Endowment Match Funding** – The Massachusetts legislature approved a bill providing \$5M for UMass campuses through the Endowment Match Program which provides \$1 in state matching funds for every \$2 raised through private fundraising. The program has a proven history of incentivizing private giving and aids the UMass campuses in leveraging their existing donor bases to contribute to endowed funds.

UMMS in the Community

UMMS faculty, staff and students have long played an important role in the community they call home – Worcester. In recent months, the OCGR has coordinated a number of community service initiatives.

- ◇ **United Way Day of Caring** - UMMS employees joined other teams comprising 1,200 local volunteers who fanned out across Central Mass. to participate in one-day community service projects with UMMS staff volunteering at East Middle School.
- ◇ **Holiday Harvest** - Chancellor Collins and UMMS staffers were on hand distributing Thanksgiving turkey dinners to veterans and their families at the Veterans Inc. annual Holiday Harvest event. UMMS has a longstanding partnership with Veterans Inc., the largest provider of support services to veterans and their families in New England.
- ◇ **State House Health Fair** – UMMS students, faculty and staff joined staff from the Department of Public Health for the annual State House Health Fair. Nearly 200 flu immunizations were administered by UMMS nursing students with medical students conducting blood pressure and BMI screening and staff providing information on vaping.
- ◇ **Winter Clothing Drive** - UMMS again participated in the annual Worcester Public Schools Coats for Kids Drive. The mission of the coat drive is to provide new, warm outerwear to Worcester children in need in order to foster confidence and increase their attendance and participation in school.

Carnegie Foundation Community Engagement Classification



UMMS was the first medical school in the nation to receive the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching’s Community Engagement Classification. UMMS was recognized for “excellent alignment among campus mission, culture, leadership, resources and practices

that support dynamic and noteworthy community engagement.”

Unlike the Carnegie Foundation’s other classifications that rely on national data, Community Engagement is an “elective” classification—institutions participate voluntarily by submitting required materials describing the nature and extent of their engagement with the community, be it local or beyond. A key to the classification as “community engaged” is the institution’s fundamental alignment of mission and actions.

Specific educational initiatives cited in the classification include the Population Health Clerkship, which is mandatory for nursing and medical students, and the Martin Luther King Jr. Semester of Service project grants that support student-designed community-responsive service learning projects in the Worcester area.



UMMS Hosts State House Health Fair

Faculty, staff and students from UMMS provided flu shots, blood pressure screenings, BMI measurements and preventative health information at the State House Health Fair on November 22. Several hundred people attended the event, held in partnership with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, with nearly 200 immunizations administered.



About the Office of Community and Government Relations (OCGR)

The OCGR is committed to strengthening its relationships with public officials and community stakeholders, increasing visibility of the medical school throughout the region and increasing resources for the medical school's priorities. In addition, the office:

- ◇ Advocates with elected officials and other key policymakers regarding UMMS's primary legislative and regulatory priorities;
- ◇ Encourages public officials to utilize us as a resource for informed insight on major medical, health care and research issues with which they are confronted;
- ◇ Serves as a resource for the medical school community on governmental issues;
- ◇ Identifies and strengthens partnerships with local community and neighborhood organizations; and
- ◇ Keeps public officials and the community informed of important medical school developments.

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