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## Fitchburg State University Today

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### Students take spotlight at in-person research conference, convocation and recognition night

The campus community gathered on Thursday for the return of our in-person [undergraduate conference for research and creative practice](#), [honors convocation](#) and recognition night for campus clubs and organizations.

The last non-virtual research conference was held in 2019. This year's program marked a return to in-person oral presentations, poster sessions, roundtable talks, and music and theater showcases. See photos from [research conference](#) and [convocation](#) on the Burg Blog.

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### Campus hosts Early College convening

The campus hosted educators and administrators from across Massachusetts on Wednesday, April 12 for a daylong series of discussions and workshops on Early College, a program that lets high school students experience and complete college-level coursework. (See photos [here](#).)



Massachusetts Secretary of Education Patrick Tutwiler, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Commissioner Jeffrey C. Riley and Department of Higher Education Commissioner Noe Ortega (who met with students, faculty and administrators as part of his own [tour](#) of campus on April 11) cited the success of Early College programs in opening doors of opportunity for students.

President Lapidus opened the event by citing the growth of Early College on the university's campus, with the number of participating students growing by more than 40% in the last year. The university has formal agreements with Mount Wachusett Community College and local high schools including Athol, Fitchburg, Gardner, Leominster, Narragansett Regional, and Sizer School that create credit-bearing opportunities for students.

[Read more](#)



## NEH grant support

The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) has awarded the university \$500,000 to support the development of the performing arts center on Main Street.

The grant, [announced](#) Tuesday, April 18, was awarded by the NEH Challenge Grant program, and will catalyze additional

fundraising efforts by the university.

The NEH grant will support the construction of a 15,830-square-foot “black box” theater adjacent to the historic theater at 717 Main St. in the heart of downtown Fitchburg. The new space will support university students and the community, serving as an applied humanities learning laboratory for students as well as a mechanism to drive downtown revitalization through expanded arts and cultural experiences.

[Read more](#)

## ASB documentary to be screened

Delegates from this year's Alternative Spring Break trip to Puerto Rico will be sharing a documentary about their personal and shared experiences **today at 3 p.m.** in Ellis White Lecture Hall in Hammond Hall.



GLOVES & TRASH BAGS ARE AVAILABLE

ROUTE: RINDGE ROAD, AROUND CAMPUS, PARKING LOT, WOODS BEHIND BASEBALL FIELD

MONDAY APRIL 24, 2023

# EARTH DAY EVENT

MEET IN FRONT OF THE ANTONUCCI SCIENCE BUILDING AT 3:30 PM

PARTICIPATING CLUBS: SIGMA PI, BIOLOGY & CHEMISTRY, OUTDOOR ADVENTURE, CRIMINAL JUSTICE

ORGANIZED BY THE SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE BOARD OF HEALTH OF THE CITY OF FITCHBURG

THE IDEA FOR EARTH DAY WAS ORIGINALLY BORN IN 1969, WHEN A US SENATOR NAMED GAYLORD NELSON WITNESSED THE EFFECTS OF A MASSIVE OIL SPILL IN SANTA BARBARA, CA. HE CALLED TO ACTION ALL AMERICANS TO TAKE A STAND FOR THE ENVIRONMENT IN 1970, AND THOUSANDS OF COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES ACROSS THE UNITED STATES ORGANIZED PROTESTS FOR A HEALTHY, SUSTAINABLE EARTH.

## Earth Day cleanup planned

In observance of Earth Day, the Sustainability Committee, in partnership with the City of Fitchburg Board of Health, is organizing a trash pickup **today at 3:30 p.m.**

Volunteers are asked to meet in the lobby of the Antonucci Science Complex, and the pickup route will begin on Rindge Road.

Gloves and trash bags will be available.

Participating clubs include Sigma Pi; the Biology & Chemistry Club; the Outdoor Adventure Club; and the Criminal Justice Club.

## Financial Sustainability Task Force hosts forums on Tuesday

The [Financial Sustainability Task Force](#) will hold open forums at **10:15 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. Tuesday** in the main lounge at Hammond Hall. Details on virtual participation are below:

- Morning Session: <https://youtube.com/live/RmcnVuKq3Ts>
- Afternoon Session: <https://youtube.com/live/leOtulPGj0g>. ASL interpreters will be available for the afternoon session.

[Learn more](#)



## Faculty present on critical literacy at Oxford conference

Associate Professor Katharine Covino (English Studies) and Associate Professor Lyndsey Benharris (Education) recently traveled to England to present at the World Literacy Summit at Oxford University, sharing their research on how

to promote critical literacy for early readers.

The selective conference included just 120 presentations representing educators and researchers from 85 countries, with an in-person and virtual audience that exceeded 45,000 attendees.

The professors are looking to show teachers how they can inspire readers to consider complicated questions about the subjects they are learning.

The faculty members are also co-authors of a new book, *Challenging Bias and Promoting Transformative Education in Public Schooling Through Critical Literacy*, that will be published later this year.

[Read more](#)

## "Made in Italy" series concludes with guided tour of Italian cheeses

The Center for Italian Culture concludes its "Made in Italy" programming series on **Thursday, April 27** with "Formaggio Formidabile," an expert-guided tasting of Italian cheese and wines.

Fred Plotkin, a popular expert on opera and everything relating to Italy, will serve as a virtual guide to this in-person evening dedicated to the special pleasures of Italian cheese and wine. Plotkin is the author of seven books on Italian food culture, including the brand-new *Italy for Food Lovers* that he co-wrote with travel guru Rick Steves.

The program will be held at **5:30 p.m. Thursday** in the main lounge at Hammond Hall. Tickets are \$50 and may be purchased [online](#).

Last week, the series welcomed Professor Elizabeth Krause from UMass Amherst for a talk on the nature of authenticity as explored in the Made in Italy series. Learn more about that presentation [here](#).

### Formaggio Formidabile

A Guided Tasting of Classic Italian Cheeses  
with Fred Plotkin

**Thursday, April 27 at 5:30 PM**

Fred Plotkin, co-author of the just-published *Rick Steves Italy for Food Lovers*, will discuss five Italian cheeses, their history and usage, and how to correctly taste them for maximum pleasure. Ideal wine pairing and sweet or savory accompaniments and a delicious Italian dessert will complete the occasions.

MADE IN ITALY

Throughout the 2022-23 academic year, the Center for Italian Culture will present a series of programs developed around the theme "Made in Italy".

From fashion to sports cars to fine cuisine, the programs will spotlight the enduring impact and global reach of Italian-made products.

SCAN FOR MORE INFO ▶

OR VISIT: [fitchburgstate.edu/made-in-italy](https://fitchburgstate.edu/made-in-italy)

**FITCHBURG STATE UNIVERSITY**  
CENTER FOR ITALIAN CULTURE



## Take Back the Night Gets a New Look

The campus will observe Sexual Assault Awareness Month with a campaign to raise public awareness about sexual assault, encourage conversation on the topic, and offer support to those impacted by the issue.

For the university's 16th annual Take Back the Night (TBTN) observance, [Counseling Services](#) is introducing a unique and creative way to uplift the many voices within our community. TBTN is an annual tradition on this campus in which we come together, promote awareness surrounding sexual violence, and offer compassion and support for

those who have been affected by such violence.

Fitchburg State has the opportunity to create an interactive, community-wide, quilt with messages of support, survivorship, and hope.

Throughout campus in recent weeks, there have been quilt materials and sharpies for students, staff, and faculty to share their messages and be a part of the movement. Counseling Services is currently in the process of stitching together the quilt, to be displayed on campus.

Blank quilt squares will be left around the actual quilt itself, along with sharpies for people to continue to engage and be a part of the message. You can view and contribute to the quilt, which will be set up in the tower lounge on the first floor of Hammond Hall from **Wednesday, April 26 to Tuesday, May 9.**



## Students will share experiences from Heart of Europe at talk on May 3

Students and staff who traveled on the "Heart of Europe" journey this Spring will share their experiences and lessons learned about contemporary international relations in an open discussion at **7 p.m. Wednesday, May 3** in the Miller Oval in Miller Hall. Admission is free and open to the campus community and wider public.

"Teaching our students in my Europe Today course about recent European history and powerful international events unfolding in the heart of Europe provides them not only with the wonderful educational preparation to visit The Netherlands, Germany, and Poland, but also transformative experiences influencing their lives and careers," said **Professor Joshua Spero** (Economics, History and Political Science).

## Reminder: Vote on next year's Community Read

Voting is [now open](#) for the 2023-24 [Community Read](#) selection. The nominated selections include:

- *Persepolis* by Marjane Satrapi (2003)
- *An Immense World: How*

*Animal Senses Reveal the Hidden Realms Around Us* by Ed Yong (2022)

- *Seek You: A Journey Through American Loneliness* by Kristen Radtke (2021)
- *The Unfortunates* by J.K. Chukwu (2023)
- *White Mountains State* by Keith Gentili (2022)

[Voting](#) is open until **Monday, April 28**.



## Want to bring grads to campus? The Alumni Office can help

Is your department looking to bring alumni back to campus? The [Alumni Office](#) can help! They have a database of all Fitchburg State alumni and can help you not only identify alumni to bring back, but they can help you contact them, too.

You don't need permission to invite alumni to campus, but looping in the **Alumni Office** can benefit you. They can provide you with resources that you may not have known about and they have Fitchburg State swag to thank alumni for their participation.

The Alumni Office tracks which alumni are engaged with the university and campus events, so keeping the office informed, in turn helps your department for future events.

If you are planning to invite alumni back to campus, please contact **Director of Alumni and Family Relations Tanya Hoos Crowley** at x3441 or [tcrowle7@fitchburgstate.edu](mailto:tcrowle7@fitchburgstate.edu).



## Sustainability Snapshot

The Sustainability Advisory Committee shares the following information for the campus community: Agriculture and our food systems have more impact on the environment than any other human activity, and contribute the largest amount of greenhouse gasses. Because food is so important, two simple strategies can dramatically reduce our footprint. First, cutting down on meat and dairy,

especially red meat, can reduce emissions of greenhouse gasses from food by up to 61%. And a healthier diet is a bonus! Second, 30-40% of the food supply in the US is simply thrown away. The simple act of reducing food waste has a huge environmental benefit (not to mention the money savings benefit.)

## 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 theater production of [Extremities](#), the Center for Faculty Scholarship [book talk](#), local middle school students attending the [Young Falcons Academy](#) during their April vacation, the football team running a [drive](#) to find prospective bone marrow donors, a sneak peek of last week's [Dance Show](#), and the Center for Diversity and Inclusiveness holding an [ice cream sundae](#) celebration. Academic scenes include alumna Amber Haney visiting Associate Professor Kisha Tracy's [writing II](#) class, and outdoor sessions of Associate Professor Nermin Bayazit's [informal math modeling](#), Associate Professor Billy Samulak's [chemistry for health science](#), and Associate Professor Erin Rehrig's [life science for educators](#).



Communications Media Student Honors Exhibition

# VISIONS

2023  
Opening:  
Wednesday April 26, 2023  
Exhibition Dates:  
April 26 to June 30, 2023

Visions is a Juried Honors Exhibition of Communications Media Department student work at Fitchburg State University. We cordially invite you to join us in celebrating their creative accomplishments!

3:30pm  
Alumni Panel  
Ellis White Lecture Hall

5:30pm  
Gallery Opening and Reception  
Hammond Hall Art Gallery

5:30pm  
Game Design Showcase  
Hammond Hall

7:00pm  
Film & Video Screening  
Weston Auditorium

Free Admission, Light Refreshments.  
www.fitchburgstate.edu/visions

FITCHBURG STATE UNIVERSITY

## CenterStage and cultural events

This week: VISIONS opens

[Visions](#), the juried honors showcase of the year's best original student work in the Communications Media Department, opens **Wednesday, April 26**. The entire campus and local community looks forward to this annual event, which consists of an Alumni Panel, Gallery Art Exhibition, Theater Showcase, and a Film and Video screening. The schedule includes:

- 3:30 p.m. Alumni Panel, Ellis White Lecture Hall
- 5:30 p.m. Gallery Opening, Hammond Hall Art Gallery
- 5:30 p.m. Game Design Presentation and Reception, Hammond G-Lobby
- 7 p.m. Film and Video Screening, Weston Auditorium

[Learn more](#)

### CenterStage presents: Artrageous, April 28

The high-energy, interactive performance troupe Artrageous will perform at Weston Auditorium at **7 p.m. Friday** as part of the Fitchburg State University CenterStage arts and culture series. Tickets are [available online](#).

Artrageous includes multi-talented performance artists, world class singers and recording artists, highly trained dancers and audience motivators, and veteran musicians hailing from the high desert of New Mexico. Their high energy performance is a combination of all arts on one stage combined with humor and interaction in a frenzy of movement and color.

### Chamber Choir and Concert Choir present "One Voice" on May 9

The Fitchburg State Chamber Choir and Concert Choir will perform music including pop, musical theater, Renaissance, folk songs, spirituals, Baroque, R&B, and avant-garde selections at **7:30 p.m. Tuesday, May 9** in Weston Auditorium. Admission is free and open to the public.



## Faculty Notes

**Associate Professor Danette Day** (Education) was celebrated at the State House this month as the 3rd Worcester District's honoree for Black Excellence on the Hill. The annual event is sponsored by the Massachusetts Black and Latino Legislative Caucus. She is pictured here with State Rep. Michael Kushmerek.

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