

Fitchburg State University Today

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Ethan F. Becker '93 to deliver commencement address



Ethan Becker

Ethan F. Becker, a published author, international speech coach and developer of communication training and coaching programs, will deliver the address at Fitchburg State University's undergraduate commencement ceremony on Saturday, May 19.

Becker, who will also be awarded an honorary degree, is a 1993 graduate of Fitchburg State. His presentation will continue a recent tradition of welcoming accomplished alumni back to campus to deliver the commencement address.

Becker is president of the 48-year-old firm [The Speech Improvement Company Inc.](#) and the co-author of the best-selling book *Mastering Communication at Work*. He has developed and delivered powerful customized motivational training programs on various topics related to communication worldwide. In addition to group work, he serves as a trusted advisor and coach to many. He has worked with organizations including Harvard University, Apple Computer, the New York Giants, Bain Capital, Biogen, IBM and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, to name just a few.

"Ethan Becker is a successful and engaged alumnus whose insights and advice will be of great benefit to our graduates and their guests," Fitchburg State University President Robert V. Antonucci said. "We are delighted that he will be sharing his wisdom with the campus community."

The Speech Improvement Company features professional speech coaches who help people become comfortable, effective speakers, providing consulting, group training, workshops and individualized coaching to clients. Their worldwide roster of clients includes executives, managers, politicians, celebrities and individuals. The company focuses on formal public speaking, mechanics of speech, fear of speaking, accent reduction, leadership communication, sales communication, customer service and communication strategy, among other topics.



Becker studied communications media at Fitchburg State, and counts the theoretical and practical grounding he received at the university as integral to his career success. His professional postings have taken him across the globe, from a recent posting in Malaysia to working with clients in Japan, Australia, Singapore and Korea. In addition to his bachelor of science degree from Fitchburg State, Becker earned an MBA from the school of business at Capella University and is currently working toward a doctorate.

Becker lives with his wife, Kelly Durkin Becker '94, and their three children in Marlboro.

Frank O'Donnell sworn in as new trustee



Frank O'Donnell

Frank O'Donnell of Swampscott was sworn in this week as a member of the Fitchburg State University Board of Trustees. The 1993 graduate of Fitchburg State will serve as the alumni representative to the board.

He replaces Beverly Farias, who recently completed a 10-year term on the board of trustees.

O'Donnell is a highly accomplished National Security executive who currently serves as vice president for mission support at CSMI, a defense contractor based in Lawrence. He earned a bachelor's degree from Fitchburg State in 1993 and later completed his law degree from Suffolk University Law School and master's in public administration from the Sawyer School of Management at Suffolk

University simultaneously.

Prior to working at CSMI, O'Donnell was a principal for another small defense contractor, SM Consulting, which he helped grow to a \$100 million per year organization. In 2008, SM Consulting was sold to SAIC - a Fortune 500 company and one of the world's largest defense contractors. O'Donnell became a vice president in SAIC's Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) Division. In 2011, he left to join CSMI.

O'Donnell was selected by the Alumni Association to represent their ranks on the board of trustees. The alumni representative is one of two spots on the board reserved for elected members, the other being the student trustee.

Previously, O'Donnell served as a member of Fitchburg State's Alumni Board of Directors from 1999 to 2012.

Volunteer Center recognizes community partnerships

The university recently recognized 13 community partners during a ceremony celebrating a renewed commitment to volunteerism.

The university has long had a volunteer center but is reinvigorating its efforts to encourage students to be active in community service organizations. To that end, the Volunteer Center hosted the Inaugural Community Partnership Initiative Breakfast earlier this month.

"The one word that is key to this whole initiative is partnership," President Robert V. Antonucci said during the event. "Together we can be involved in this community and make a difference for those that we service. It's a celebration, but it's also a start."

Student Government Association President David Robinson said student groups have a solid

history of performing community service projects and fundraisers that benefit local non-profit organizations.

"We're going to do more and more," Robinson said.

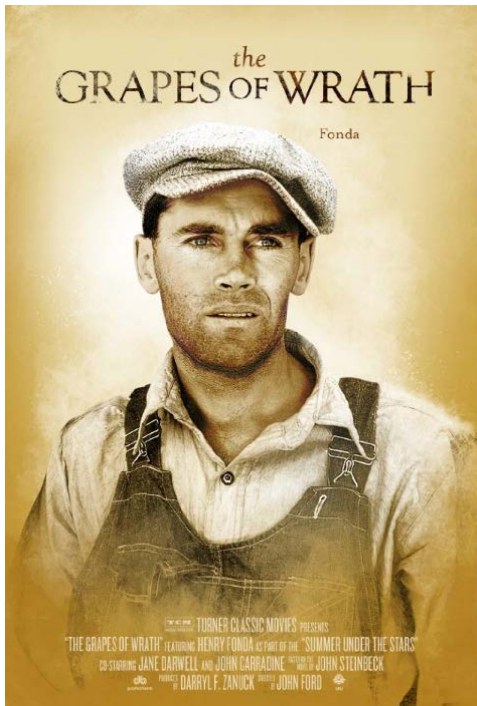
"As a long time citizen and advocate of civic engagement, I have had the privilege of working and volunteering with a good many of these organizations over the past decade," said Beth A. Robbins, community liaison for the Volunteer Center, who has facilitated the relationships between the university and the agencies through the Americorps program. "We herald them for their vigilant and dedicated efforts to their cause and look forward to strengthening the bridge between Fitchburg State University and these efforts."

The university recently hosted a volunteer fair where students were encouraged to sign up to lend their talents to a variety of local agencies. April is volunteer awareness month.

The following organizations were saluted at the partnership ceremony:

- DKMS bone marrow registry
- Our Father's House
- AmeriCorps Job Ready program
- House of Peace and Education
- American Red Cross
- Ginny's Helping Hand Inc.
- Special Olympics of Massachusetts
- LUK Inc.
- Salvation Army
- Boys and Girls Club of Fitchburg and Leominster
- United Way of North Central Massachusetts
- Battered Women's Resources
- Fitchburg Access Television

Third Thursday movie series continues this week with "The Grapes of Wrath"



The Third Thursday Film Series, the university's partnership with the Fitchburg Public Library, continues this week with "The Grapes of Wrath" (1940). The screening will take place at 7 p.m. Thursday at the public library, 610 Main St.

Communications Media Professor George Bohrer will introduce the film and lead a short discussion afterward. Admission is free.

Director John Ford's classic adaptation of the John Steinbeck novel tells the tale of a poor Midwest family who travels to California after being forced off their land in the Great Depression. Henry Fonda delivers an iconic performance as Tom Joad in the film, which also stars Jane Darwell and John Carradine.

John Ford won one of his four Best Director Academy Awards for this film, and Henry Fonda was also nominated for an Oscar for Best Actor.

University welcomes CMM Collection in ceremony April 20

The university will dedicate its new archive devoted to the work of the communications theorists behind Coordinated Management of Meaning (CMM) during a celebration on Friday, April 20.

CMM theory was developed by W. Barnett Pearce and Vernon E. Cronen and posits that communication is a two-sided process involving the making and managing of meaning, and coordinating action. CMM is used as a tool, and studied itself, at universities across the globe.

The dedication ceremony includes visiting CMM scholars who will also take part in a weekend-long workshop.

When it announced that Fitchburg State would become the repository of Pearce and Cronen's papers, President Antonucci said it was a coup for the university. The university's special collections include also papers and manuscripts from celebrated figures including Robert Cormier and R.A. Salvatore.

"Communications Media remains one of our most heralded and competitive programs," Antonucci said. "To have the seminal works behind this communication theory in a permanent collection on our campus will be a great resource for our students as well as researchers from other institutions."

Pearce, who passed away in November, was a professor emeritus in the School of Human & Organization Development at Fielding Graduate University. He served on the faculties of The University of North Dakota, University of Kentucky, University of Massachusetts at Amherst, and Loyola University Chicago, in the position of department chair at the latter two institutions. Improving the quality of communication was his driving professional commitment, first taking the form of developing a conceptual understanding of communication, known as CMM, and, more recently, integrating scholarship with the practice of designing and facilitating communication, particularly in public meetings about community issues. He published 11 books and, in 2011, co-founded the CMM Institute for Personal and Social Evolution (www.cmminstitute.net). His hope was that the institute would become an institutional home for CMM and that its focus would be to foster personal and social evolution.

Cronen recently retired from the faculty at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst and is now a member of the faculty at the University of North Carolina, Wilmington.

Pearce's initial donation of papers and records was made in June 2011, and Cronen's records are expected on campus soon.

The W. Barnett Pearce Records provide a unique view into both the theoretical and practical application of communication theory by providing researchers with a retrospective context in which to understand the development of CMM.

The records include published and unpublished writings by Pearce, research materials important to the development of CMM and related to the work of others using CMM, and materials related to the practice of Pearce as an educator, trainer and consultant, especially as it relates to his use of CMM as a practitioner. The collection includes approximately 15 linear feet of papers, correspondence, published monographs, video and audio recordings and electronic records.

The Fitchburg State University Archives and Special Collections were established in 1982 and operate within the Amelia V. Gallucci-Cirio Library. The archives collect, organize, maintain and make accessible records and materials that have enduring value to the history of the university. Its primary function is to preserve institutional records that provide administrative, legal, fiscal and historical evidentiary value.

In addition to Fitchburg State University records, the archives collect and preserve materials that document and support the life and community of the university, which includes faculty, students, staff and alumni as well as its engagement with the city of Fitchburg and local region.

Learn about the educational opportunities available at Fitchburg State University when the Office of Graduate and Continuing Education (GCE) hosts an information session on Tuesday, April 24 at 5 p.m.

The free session, where attendees will have the opportunity to speak with advisors and register for classes, will take place in Thompson Hall.

GCE at Fitchburg State offers more than 45 graduate and undergraduate degree and certificate programs. At this information session you can see the campus and take the first steps toward achieving your educational goals.

There will be special information sessions from 5 to 5:30 p.m. for graduate special education, education (early childhood, elementary and middle school) and counseling programs. Drop in anytime between 5 and 6:30 p.m. to meet our distance/online learning coordinator to learn more about online programs.

Visit <http://web.fitchburgstate.edu/gce/infosession/> to register.

Falcon Players present "A Night of Absurdity" on April 24

The Falcon Players, the university's student-run theatre troupe, will present "A Night of Absurdity" on Tuesday, April 24 at 8 p.m. in Percival Auditorium.

The show consists of student-written monologues, scenes and short plays, augmented by live music and comedy. There is no set charge for admission but audience members are asked to pay what they can. Doors will open at 7:30 p.m.

Tyler E. Welsh, the student director of the program, promises a silly and entertaining night.

"It will be absolutely absurd," he said.

Works planned for the show include five-minute wordless scenes, 10-minute plays, scenes from plays that are still being written, monologues, and a completely improvised segment from the university's Improv Club. Welsh said the players also plan to recognize campus offices that support arts on campus and in the community.

"The Falcon Players and the theatre track here at Fitchburg State have always supported student-written works," Welsh said.

Undergraduate Research Conference and Convocation Thursday, April 26

The university will cancel classes on Thursday, April 26 for a daylong celebration of academic accomplishment.

The morning will feature the university's third Undergraduate Conference on Research and Creative Practice, featuring presentations by Fitchburg State students from all departments promoting creativity and scholarship. The conference is sponsored by the university's Center for Teaching and Learning and the Student Government Association.

Student works will be presented in poster sessions, oral presentations, media showings and performances. The conference, running from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., will be held in the C-Wing of



The Undergraduate Conference on Research continues to grow.

the McKay Building.

The spotlight on academic excellence will continue with the 35th annual Honors Convocation at 2 p.m. in Weston Auditorium.

Fitchburg State welcomes back Special Olympics Friday, April 27



Fitchburg State will once again host the Special Olympics on Friday, April 27, at the Elliot Field athletic complex.

The 5th annual Special Olympics North Central School Day Games will be a celebration of the accomplishments of more than 450 talented athletes.

The program brings together athletes, local schools, community members, Fitchburg State students and faculty members. More than 450 athletes and 150

volunteers are expected to attend the events.

The local games are organized by the university's education department and its honor society, Kappa Delta Pi, along with Fitchburg State faculty members.

The opening ceremony on April 27 will begin at 9 a.m. and the games are scheduled to conclude at 1 p.m. For additional information, contact specialolympics@fitchburgstate.edu, or visit the [Facebook page](#) dedicated to the games.

Nursing students to hold health screening May 2

The Student Nurses Association will host a health screening and promotion clinic on Wednesday, May 2, outside the Hammond Campus Center. The event, running from 11 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., will include more than 20 nursing students offering information about healthier lifestyles. The event is open to the public.



"The health screening and promotion clinic is a way for nursing students to really put their knowledge and skills to practice," said Michael Mielniczek, vice president of the Student Nurses Association. "We nursing students love to learn, but we love to help even more."

There will be tables set up for screenings, information, healthy food options and items for attendees to take home and help them live healthier lives.

"Nursing students have a duty to promote and teach healthier lifestyles to the population around us," Mielniczek said. College students deal with sleep, stress, and other health problems, and the association is looking to promote safe and healthy choices for students and faculty.

Graphic Design Lecture Series continues Thursday, May 3

A free lecture series featuring award-winning designers who have helped shape and articulate how graphic design defines our culture continues next month when the Communications Media Department at Fitchburg State University welcomes its next speaker.

The Graphic Design Lecture Series concludes Thursday, May 3 with Alston Purvis, chairman of the Graphic Design Department at the School of Visual Arts at Boston University. Purvis, an author of many highly respected books on design history and the editor of *Meggs' History of Graphic Design*, will present "Dutch Poster Design: A Century of Innovation" on Thursday, May 3, at 3:30 p.m. in the Condikey Science Lecture Hall. The talk will address the unique influence of Dutch poster design over the last 100 years.

The lecture series is supported by the Ruth Butler Grant at Fitchburg State University.

The series opened in March with a talk by Clifford Stoltze, the principal and creative director of Stoltze Design in Boston. His presentation included a survey of over 40 years of high notes in design for music featuring favorites from Stoltze's own LP, CD and poster collections as well as some of Stoltze Design's own projects for the music industry.

The series continued in April with Richard Doubleday, who discussed cultural identity in graphic design.

CenterStage and cultural events

Picture the iconic Groucho Marx, his greasepaint mustache, hand-in-the-crook-of-his-back swagger, ever-present cigar and rapid-fire delivery of innuendo-laden patter. Now you can experience him, when the CenterStage at Fitchburg State University arts and culture series presents "[An Evening with Groucho](#)" on Saturday, April 28 at 8 p.m. at Weston Auditorium.

In this fast paced 90 minutes of hilarity, award-winning



Frank Ferrante as Groucho.

actor/director/playwright [Frank Ferrante](#) recreates his acclaimed portrayal of the youngest Marx brother whose legendary career spanned vaudeville, radio, television and film. Ferrante has performed as Groucho on PBS, in New York and London. The performance - appropriate for all ages - is packed with stories, songs and inspired audience interaction.

The New York Times has called Ferrante "the greatest living interpreter of Groucho Marx's material."

The two-act comedy consists of the best Groucho one-liners, anecdotes and songs including "Hooray for Captain Spalding," and "Lydia, the Tattooed Lady." The audience literally becomes part of the show as Ferrante ad-libs his way throughout the performance in grand Groucho style.

"An Evening with Groucho" is co-sponsored by Rollstone Bank & Trust and Worcester Magazine and with the support of media partner WPKZ 105.3 FM/AM1280.

The Weston Box Office, 978-665-3347, is open Wednesday through Friday from 12:30 to 3:30 p.m. Tickets can also be ordered [online](#).

Spring Concerts

The Fitchburg State University Jazz Band and Concert Band will present their Spring Ensemble Concert on Wednesday, May 2 at 7:30 p.m. in Weston Auditorium. Admission is free. The ensemble will present an array of instrumental music. The Spring Choral Concert will be held Monday, May 7 at 7:30 p.m., also at Weston Auditorium. Admission is free. The choral arts students at Fitchburg State will perform under the direction of a guest director.



Model UN team competes in Chicago

The university's Model UN team attended a Model Arab League Competition at Northeastern University March 31 to April 1, and then the Model UN Competition hosted by the University of Chicago April 5-8. The competition in Chicago brought together almost 900 students from universities all across the US and Canada.

Professor Eric Budd (political science) is advisor to the group, which included Chantelle Porter, Paul Kilungu, Kapriskie Seide, Grace Anifowose and Grace Ngethe

"Unlike other Model UN competitions, the University of Chicago's is a crisis scenario where the situation is constantly changing, forcing the students to quickly respond to a changing global crisis," said Budd.

Learn how to maximize your social media presence

Attention campus departments: Are you interested in advertising your services on social media outlets like Facebook and Twitter, but don't know a "tweet" from a "poke?" The Information Desk is ready to help.



Social media outlets like Facebook and Twitter are powerful tools to get your message out, or to share news and events. But getting started can be difficult, and what to do with the page once it's up and running can also be hard to navigate. That's where the Information Desk comes in.



Information Desk Manager Mary Panico and her staff have already worked with several campus departments on building and expanding their social media presence.

"My main goal is for my staff and me to be extra helping hands to those departments around campus who feel they would like their services available on the social media outlets used by our student body daily," Panico said.

Panico, a student herself, noted the Information Desk's own Facebook page has become a resource for students, posting items about faculty absences, upcoming events and other important deadlines. Contact her at infodesk@fitchburgstate.edu and learn how to get your social media presence started, or how to maximize its effectiveness.

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