

# Fitchburg State University Today

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## Gustafson honored as one of state's 29 Who Shine



Gov. Patrick, left, and Courtney Gustafson at the Statehouse.

Graduating senior Courtney B. Gustafson was recognized by Gov. Deval Patrick on Thursday, May 10 at the Statehouse as one of the [29 Who Shine](#), the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education's tribute to outstanding public college and university graduates.

Gustafson was accompanied to the event by President Antonucci as well as a contingent of well-wishers from the campus, including Associate Professor [Ian Williams](#) (English), whom Gustafson cited as a key mentor in achieving her academic success.

The celebration at the Statehouse featured an honoree from each community college, state university and University of Massachusetts campus. Students were required to be residents of Massachusetts who had a strong academic record and a history of civic engagement.

Gustafson has been a standout scholar since her arrival at Fitchburg State University in 2008. Her cumulative GPA heading toward graduation this week is an astounding 3.99.



For Gustafson, a commuting student who was raised in Fitchburg, the journey to Fitchburg State began as one of access; this was a college education she could afford. But it became much more as she realized the opportunities and experiences that were available to a motivated student.

Gustafson balanced a demanding class schedule with work in Fitchburg State's Office of Student Development, where she quickly rose to a managerial position. She also held down a second off-campus job. She has been a member of the English honor society, wrote for the student newspaper and was selected for leadership development programs offered by the university. This spring, Gustafson added an internship at the Worcester Telegram & Gazette to her already full workload.

She has also endeavored to make a difference on campus. With fully half of the undergraduate population commuting to the university, Gustafson decided the group needed a voice. She founded the Commuter Club in her second year and oversaw the development of programs catering to this population. The club continues to thrive.

Gustafson's advocacy and curiosity transcend the campus, however. She is in her second semester volunteering at the Shirley State Prison, where she teaches a writing course to inmates. With another student, under the direction of Professor Williams, Gustafson designed a syllabus and curriculum for the course and put together lesson plans and assignments for 17 men in the prison.

Gustafson has been accepted into an MA/PhD program in English rhetoric and composition at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, where she has also been offered a teaching assistantship and a fellowship to cover her fees. She plans to continue teaching writing after earning her advanced degree.

#### Additional commencement honorees announced

This week the campus celebrates the [116th commencement exercises](#). The [Graduate Commencement](#) ceremony on Thursday, May 17, at 6:30 p.m. in Weston Auditorium, will include awards to Dr. Elaine B. Francis, professor emerita, for outstanding contributions the graduate

program, and Beverly S. Farias '52, who will be presented the Trustee Award for Service.

The [Undergraduate Commencement](#) ceremony on Saturday, May 19, at 10 a.m. on the main quad, will feature the commencement address by Ethan F. Becker '93 and the presentation of Distinguished Alumnae Awards to Juliette C. Youngblood '84 and Simone M. Youngblood '84.

### **Dr. Elaine B. Francis**

Dr. Elaine B. Francis, professor emerita, is a dedicated educator who has devoted more than three decades of her professional life to the Fitchburg State community.

A graduate of our Special Education Department, and a faculty member since 1978, Francis became the university's first dean of education in 2003. Throughout her career she insisted on high standards for the university's programs to ensure that graduates were highly qualified to become educators. Before working at the university she spent years as a teacher of children and adult students with moderate to severe special needs. She built on this work to co-author a textbook, *Understanding and Implementing Inclusion: A Practical Guide for Classroom Teachers*, published in 2003 and still in use today.



Dr. Elaine B. Francis

Her accomplishments at Fitchburg State include developing the curriculum for numerous programs. During her tenure as chairperson of the Special Education Department and chairperson of its moderate and severe disabilities graduate programs, Francis led a team of faculty in the development and implementation of two innovative clinical master's degree programs. These cohort model programs, implemented in 1992, integrated curriculum strands in assessment, content, instruction, and collaboration. This model was implemented in Fitchburg, Chelmsford, Wellesley, and Worcester and continues to influence Fitchburg State's graduate programs. She was also instrumental in the development of the university's Reading Specialist Graduate Program.

She played a leading role in bringing the university's programs recognition from the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, and worked with such third parties as extended campuses, school districts, the National Institute of School Leadership and Franklin Pierce University to develop articulation agreements and ensure program quality and integrity were extended to other university sites.:-

Francis took on additional responsibilities in 2010, becoming chairperson of the university's Curriculum and Teaching graduate program. She continues to be an active member of the Education Department Curriculum Committee and, despite her retirement, will return to the classroom this summer to teach a hybrid course in collaboration for graduate students in a variety of special education master's programs.

### **Beverly S. Farias**

Beverly (Sherwin) Farias '52 recently completed 10 years of service to the university's Board of Trustees, where she was an impassioned and effective voice for Fitchburg State alumni. Her commitment to the university far exceeds that term of office, however, as Farias can point to more than six decades of engagement with our community.

A native of Townsend, Farias arrived at Fitchburg State in 1948 and in addition to her studies worked in the alumni office under Florence Conlon from 1948 to 1952. It was on campus that she met Joseph Farias '53, who would go on to become a member of the college's industrial arts faculty for many years.



After her graduation, Farias taught at the Spaulding Memorial School in Townsend before embarking on a 28-year career in educational sales, selling textbooks and encyclopedias. She continues to work part-time at Kappy's Fine Wine & Spirits, where she hosts wine tastings.

## **Beverly S. Farias**

Her commitment to her alma mater has been unswerving. She calls the Fitchburg State community a second family, and has been a highly visible champion of the institution and its goals.

A proud alumna, Farias has served on the Alumni Association Board of Directors since its creation, when it replaced the alumni council as the association's governing authority. She has been the association's historian for more than a decade. Her service includes more than 30 years on the group's scholarship committee - many as its chair - and also on its alumni engagement and executive committees. Farias was president of the Alumni Association from 1995 to 1998. In 1998, she was a recipient of the President's Medal.

She was also a member of the university's presidential search committee that led to the appointment of Robert V. Antonucci in 2003.

A stalwart champion of Fitchburg State since her arrival, Farias remains a fixture at campus celebrations, eager to tell our story and pay tribute to the accomplishments of its students, faculty and staff.

## **Juliette C. Youngblood**

Juliette Youngblood's career has encompassed an impressive cross-section of Hollywood's award-winning production companies, networks, and studios. Youngblood is president of Youngblood Group PC. Her longtime clients include Viacom, Paramount Pictures, CBS, MTV, Nickelodeon, and Survivor Entertainment Group.

Youngblood started her legal career at O'Melveny & Myers and then joined the Entertainment Department of Irell & Manella. She was elected partner and appointed head of the firm's Entertainment Group, a position she held until her departure to launch Youngblood Group in 2009. Youngblood has worked on numerous widely-acclaimed films, including the *Mission: Impossible* franchise and dozens of television shows, including *Survivor*.



**Juliette C. Youngblood**

Nationally recognized as a resourceful and innovative negotiator, Youngblood has been involved in numerous high-profile, headline-making deals, including Viacom's acquisition of DreamWorks and Nickelodeon's acquisition of the *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* franchise. In addition to her law practice, she teamed with producer Mark Burnett to produce theatrical motion pictures. Youngblood was named 2010 Entertainment Lawyer of the Year by the Century City Bar Association.

A member of the Planning Committee for the University of Southern California Law School - Beverly Hills Bar Association Institute on Entertainment Law and Business, Youngblood sat on the board of the Los Angeles Copyright Society, is a long-time member of Women in Film and the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, and a member of The Paley Center Media Council, which is composed of the entertainment industry's top representatives.

Youngblood received a law degree from Loyola Law School in 1990 and in 2006 was awarded its Distinguished Alumna Award. She received a master's from the University of Virginia in 1985, and graduated with high honors and two bachelor's degrees from Fitchburg State in 1984.

Youngblood, her husband and three children reside in Los Angeles.

## Simone M. Youngblood

Simone Youngblood is a member of the principal professional staff at the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory and a nationally-recognized expert in the field of modeling and simulation verification, validation, and accreditation (collectively known as VV&A). VV&A is focused on gathering and evaluating evidence to determine a simulation's capabilities, limitations and performance relative to the real-world objects being simulated.

Among the foremost experts on military and "war game" simulation assessment, Youngblood has served the United States Department of Defense with distinction for the past 16 years, leading collaborative international efforts to ensure credible use of models and simulations.

Youngblood's service as the VV&A point person for the Department of Defense includes 11 years on-site at the Department of Defense Modeling and Simulation Coordination Office.

Youngblood was editor of the Department of Defense Instruction Guide on VV&A and led the group that produced the department's Recommended Practices Guide. Additionally, Youngblood was chairwoman of numerous groups that have developed standards related to model and simulation VV&A for use by organizations including the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers and the Department of Defense. Youngblood has also served as chairwoman for several North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) technical working groups that produced NATO guidance on model and simulation VV&A.

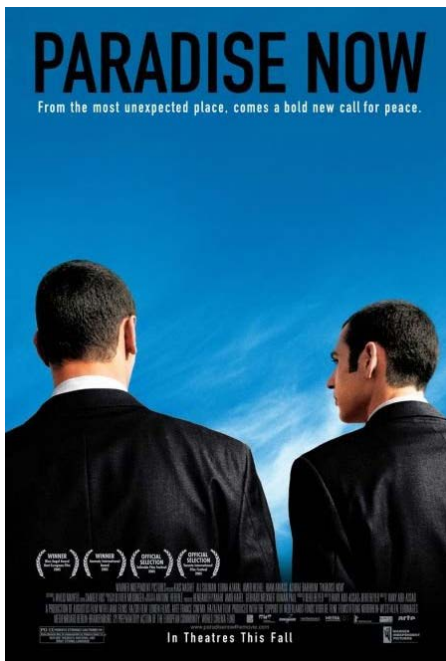
In addition, Youngblood has supported numerous VV&A applications for sponsors that include the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, the Domestic Nuclear Detection Office, and the Department of the Navy.

Youngblood earned two bachelor's degrees from Fitchburg State in 1984, in mathematics and computer science, and a master's degree in computer science from Johns Hopkins University. Youngblood resides in Ellicott City, Maryland.



**Simone M. Youngblood**

## Third Thursday film series wraps up for academic year with "Paradise Now"



The Third Thursday film series, which features a free movie followed by a discussion led by Fitchburg State faculty, concludes for the academic year this Thursday, May 17 with "Paradise Now" (2005) introduced by Professor Eric Budd.

The screenings and discussions are held in the [Fitchburg Public Library](#) auditorium, 610 Main St. "Paradise Now" will screen at 7 p.m. Thursday.

The film tells the story of two close Palestinians who are recruited by an extremist group to perpetrate a terrorist attack in Tel-Aviv. However, things go wrong and they must separate at the border. One maintains to the end his purpose of carrying out the attack while the other has doubts about it.

The Third Thursday Film Series will resume this fall.

"Paradise Now" screens this week at  
Fitchburg Public Library.

## Faculty Notes

**Daniel Sarefield** (Economics, History and Political Science) earlier this month attended the Association of Ancient Historians annual meeting, held jointly at Duke University and the University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill in Durham, N.C. This is the nation's premier gathering of ancient historians and Sarefield presented a paper entitled, "The Roman Origins of Book Burning," which is from his current book project.

Later this month Sarefield will present a paper at the Mediterranean Studies Congress, which will be held in Pula, Croatia.

## Fitchburg State University Today newsletter resumes in September

This marks the final edition of the Fitchburg State University Today newsletter for the 2011-12 academic year. The newsletter will resume this fall with news and events about the Fitchburg State campus and community.

Archived editions of Fitchburg State University Today can be found online at <http://www.fitchburgstate.edu/offices/administration/public-relations/fitchburg-state-university-today-archive>. For questions about Fitchburg State University Today, contact the Public Relations Office at (978) 665-4694. To submit to Fitchburg State University Today, visit the Public Relations site at [www.fitchburgstate.edu/publicrelations](http://www.fitchburgstate.edu/publicrelations) and click on [Request for Publicity](#).

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