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College Receives Record Number of Applications

In a testament to Merrimack's growing stature as a top-flight comprehensive private institution, college officials announced they have received a record number of student applications for the 2017-18 academic year that begins in fall.

As of March 21, the college had processed 8,572 applications, a 5 percent increase over last year, officials said.

"We're thrilled to see such strong growth in our application pool," said Neal Fogg,

senior vice president for enrollment planning and strategy. "It speaks to our outstanding programs, the quality of our faculty and staff, and our extremely welcoming community."

The Office of Admission will now begin reaching out to every admitted student — many of whom are still deciding among several colleges — between now and May 1, the deposit deadline for first-year students nationwide. Merrimack has a goal

of enrolling just over 1,000 students in the Class of 2021.

Associate Vice President of Admission Darren Conine said the office will hold several events over the next 40 days aimed at converting these admitted students to matriculants.

Key among those are Admitted Student Days, scheduled for April 1 and 8, where prospective first years and their families

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Before heading out on their study-abroad experience in Ireland, students learned the basics of Irish step dancing.

Graduate Students Explore Ireland

Luck of the Irish, indeed. A group of nine Merrimack College graduates spent their spring break traveling through Dublin, Cork and Galway, Ireland, as part of the college's first short-term study-abroad program for master's candidates.

The trip was led by Assistant Professor of Education and Community Studies Elaine Ward, the students' instructor in the course Higher Education Policy and Practice in Ireland.

"The internationalization of

higher education is the future of the field, and having a global perspective for our students is really important," Ward said.

Through her research on civic engagement in higher education, and as a native of Ireland, Ward has developed working relationships with several colleges and universities in her home country.

Her students met with officials from Dublin Institute of Technology and Technological University for Dublin, Trinity

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Financial Aid Eases Burden on Families

Financial aid makes the dream of a college education affordable for the vast majority of Merrimack students.

The college awarded more than \$56 million in scholarships and grants during the 2016-17 academic year, benefiting approximately 97 percent of students.

Navigating the financial-aid landscape can be daunting, but Merrimack's Office of Financial Aid provides answers and support throughout the academic process — from application through graduation. Merrimack students and their families are assigned their own financial-aid counselor to help guide them through the process.

Merrimack employs seven financial-aid staff members, including a director, associate director and assistant director; a senior financial aid counselor and two additional counselors; and an administrative assistant.

"The Office of Financial Aid coordinates institutional resources, provides personal counseling services and offers informational sessions to students and their families," said Director of Financial Aid Adrienne Montgomery. "Our main goals are financial literacy, excellent customer service and compliance."

A student's relationship with the financial-aid office continues after graduation. Merrimack has partnered with the nonprofit American Student Assistance to provide the education finance-support program Salt, which helps students plan for, pay for and repay their higher-education loans.

Leadership Initiative for Female Employees Launches in April

The Office of the President, in conjunction with Office of Human Resources, has launched a new initiative aimed at supporting and promoting professional-development and leadership opportunities for female employees of the college.

The Create Your Impact initiative, which will officially launch in April, responds to the challenge laid out in the college's strategic plan to "inspire and engage our people, culture and community," President Hopey said.

The program kicks off with two events in April: a networking reception, on Monday, April 10, and a DISC behavioral preferences assessment, on Thursday, April 20.

Further information about the program and the events is available at the Create Your Impact website (merrimack.edu/cyi).

Graduate Students Study in Ireland

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College Dublin, University College Cork and the National University of Ireland, Galway, where they discussed Ireland's higher-education funding models; community and civic engagement; and admission policies and practices. They also visited the Centre for Integration of Research, Teaching and Learning, akin to Merrimack's Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning.

In addition, Ward presented her research in Cork and Galway on civic and community engagement in higher education.

There was time for cultural experiences as well, including a St. Patrick's Day celebration on Friday. In preparation, students learned basic Irish step dances and the lyrics to traditional Irish songs before departing Merrimack.

"So instead of just watching, they were able participate," Ward said.



Andy Cummings, right, with running coach Andy Peloquin.

Merrimack's Own Andy Cummings Sets Sights on Boston Marathon

He's conquered the Special Olympics, competed at a high level for the Andover High School track team, and now Andy Cummings is chomping at the bit to master the Boston Marathon, in April.

The post office and facilities employee, who is autistic, proved he's up to the challenge by completing his first marathon, the Baystate in Lowell, last October, in an impressive 3 hours, 30 minutes.

"He did a lot better than anybody thought he would, really," said Cummings' mother, Louise, an adjunct professor in the School of Education and Social Policy, and an Andover High School mathematics teacher. "Now, he can't wait for Boston. He really wants it."

Cummings, 25, began running in high school, where he competed in the 1-mile

and 400-meter events. He also runs the mile and 800 in the Massachusetts Special Olympics.

"I think he just loves to run," Louise Cummings said. "He's very active, he doesn't like to sit still."

Andy works out regularly at the Sakowich Campus Center gym, runs track with the Merrimack Valley Striders, takes spinning classes at the YMCA and is an avid cyclist, often biking in the White Mountains. Sundays are reserved for runs of up to 22 miles.

Cummings occasionally runs with his father, Mike, or alongside his mother on her bicycle, but saves his longest runs for his Special Olympics coach, Andy Peloquin.

Cummings will represent the Merrimack Valley Striders at the April 17 Boston Marathon.

OFFICE OF PROCUREMENT

Follow Best Practices for P-Card Purchases

The procurement office reminds employees who use a Merrimack-issued credit card to familiarize themselves with the college's policies and procedures for purchasing and processing goods and services with the card.



The P-card, or purchasing card, as it is known, may be used to purchase low-risk goods and services, defined as those valued at less

than \$3,001 and not associated with a contract or agreement.

Using the card saves the college time and money because its administrative costs are significantly lower than purchase orders, which require more staff time to process.

"Merrimack had close to 10,000 credit-card transactions last year," said Director of Procurement Michael Magner. "Streamlining the process reduces the need to hire more personnel and allows more time to be spent on value-added projects."

Magner urged all college departments to keep close tabs on their purchases and

process their transactions in a timely fashion each month via the Works payment-management service website (<https://payment2.works.com/works>). Doing so will:

- Provide managers with the most up-to-date and accurate budget information for their departments.
- Enable timely reporting to the college's chief financial officer, president and board of trustees.
- Save staff time devoted to tracking down and reclassifying transactions.
- Positively impact Merrimack's financial rating.

Card transactions should ideally be reviewed and approved daily by the department manager, but no less than once a week, Magner said. The credit-card billing cycle ends on the 27th of each month.

All transactions must be completed and approved by the first of the following month, or on the first business day of the month following a weekend or holiday.

More information about credit-card use can be found on the MyMack portal, under the Procurement tab. Questions should be addressed to the procurement office at 978-837-5942.

NOTABLE & QUOTABLE

Laura Hsu, assistant professor of education, was quoted in a March 1 Yahoo story about the difficulty many men have coping with the aging process. "Ultimately, it comes down to a feeling of a loss of control," said Hsu, whose research explores the psychological process of aging and how it can affect physical and mental health. "When one's body or social position can no longer reinforce those feelings, increasing feelings of helplessness can ultimately take a toll on one's mental and physical health."

Kyle McInnis, associate dean and professor of health sciences, was featured on a segment of Channel 4's "Eye on Education" March 2. The piece highlighted the success of McInnis' Active Science program, which integrates physical activity, technology and academic achievement in school-age children. "We've found that physical activity in children is at an all-time low, and we need creative and innovative ways to get kids moving," McInnis said.

Thomas Nolan, associate professor and program director of the criminology and criminal justice graduate program, wrote a guest column, "The Police and Immigration: Carpe Opportunitatem," March 6 for the blog of the American Constitution Society. In the piece, Nolan argues against local police playing a greater role in the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's decision to round up and arrest illegal immigrants who do not have criminal records. "We should be deeply ashamed of this fundamentally flawed and iniquitous policy," he wrote.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Tax Forms Mailed to Employees' Homes

Employees who were eligible for medical coverage through the college for at least one month in 2016 should have recently received their Form 1095-C tax document that is required under the federal Affordable Care Act.

The forms were mailed to employees' home addresses, and have also been made available on the ADP website. To retrieve the form online, visit workforcenow.adp.com, login to your account and follow the path [Myself/Pay/Annual Statements/1095-C/2016](#).

Those who participated in any of the college-sponsored medical plans in 2016 will also receive Form 1095-B in a separate mailing from healthcare provider Harvard Pilgrim.

Neither form is required to complete your 2016 income-tax returns; however, the IRS recommends keeping both documents with your personal tax records.

If you have further questions or concerns regarding your Form 1095-C, please contact Patricia Sonia in human resources at 978-837-5472 (ext. 5472) or soniap@merrimack.edu.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Senior Awards Selection Process Begins Soon

A campus selection committee will be convened soon to begin the selection process for the college's senior awards, the provost's office said. The most prestigious of the awards, the Merrimack Medal, will be presented at the undergraduate commencement ceremony on May 21. The other awards and medals will be presented at the LEAD Awards ceremony on May 3.

Clothing, Toiletries Sought for Lenten Backpack Drive

Campus Ministry is now accepting donations for its Lenten backpack drive. New clothing and toiletries are needed to fill overnight backpacks or duffel bags for 13- to 17-year-old boys and girls who are placed in emergency foster care. Items and cash donations may be brought to the Grace J. Palmisano Center for Campus Ministry on the third floor of the Sakowich Campus Center, or the Chapel of Our Mother of Good Counsel in Austin Hall before 12:30 p.m. Mass on weekdays or 5 p.m. Mass on Sundays.

Promise Program Finds Success in Inaugural Year at Merrimack

Merrimack's new Promise program is living up to its, well, promise.

Introduced last fall by the Academic Success Center, Promise provides personalized academic support to students who benefit from a more structured approach to their studies at Merrimack. Services include one-on-one academic advising, mentoring and tutoring from upperclass students, individualized referrals to other campus resources and a specialized first-year experience course that teaches time-management and college-level study skills.

During the important first year of the program, the 85 inaugural Promise students keep pace with their peers by completing their general-education requirements as

well as courses in their desired major.

"The Promise team is excited to serve as an ally to our students as they make the ongoing transition from high school through college," said First Year Academic Counselor Sara Quagliaroli. "Since we get to know our students very well through our weekly one-on-one meetings, we're able to make very informed referrals to other campus resources, and provide tailored assistance to meet their individual needs."

The Promise program builds on the success of the college's Compass program, which provides a structured first-year experience to students whose high-school transcripts and performance indicate that academic support was an important contributor to their success.

Record Number of Applications

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experience campus life for a day and do their final comparison shopping in search of the school that is the best fit for them.

Other events and initiatives include:

- Off-campus receptions, hosted by alumni, where admitted students can mingle in an informal setting with Merrimack graduates and faculty. Eight receptions will be held this year, in Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York and Rhode Island.
- Student phonathon, where current students call admitted students in their major and/or program to give a firsthand perspective on life as a Warrior.
- High-school visits, to meet with admitted students who may not have had the chance to attend an Admitted Student Day. "It's all hands on deck," Conine said.

"Our full focus is on how do we take these students with whom we have built strong relationships over the past few years, and convince them that Merrimack is a place they can thrive."

This year's class should be relatively diverse, based on the admitted-student profile. Approximately 62 percent are from Massachusetts, 22 percent from the other New England states, 8 percent from the Mid-Atlantic region and 8 percent are from other parts of the United States or other countries.

More than a third of the admitted class — 36 percent — chose majors in the School of Science and Engineering, one-third of those in the health sciences. Twenty-seven percent chose majors in the School of Liberal Arts, 23 percent in the Girard School of Business and 14 percent in the School of Education and Social Policy.

Approximately 10 percent of the class was accepted into the honors program.



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