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Merrimack College Record

Merrimack College

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Merrimack Rises in U.S. News Rankings

On the 2017 list of U.S. News Best Regional Universities, Merrimack climbed to #56 out of nearly 190 schools in the North region. This recognition is further evidence of the pivotal achievements that have been made by Merrimack College and its community.

“We anticipate Merrimack’s presence in the higher education realm to only improve as the college continues to expand academic offerings as well as the facilities on campus,” said Christopher E. Hopey, president of Merrimack College. “Gaining a spot in this year’s ranking reflects the growth we have made to date and will continue to make for years to come.”

The institutions included on this list provide a full-range of undergraduate majors and master’s programs, with few or no doctoral programs. Across four regions of the country — North, South, Midwest and West — the list ranks 659 schools.

“Gaining a spot in this year’s ranking reflects the growth we have made to date and will continue to make for years to come.”

This ranking adds to Merrimack’s growing list of honors in recent years. Others include: U.S. News Best Regional Colleges North 2016, U.S. News Best Colleges Engineering Programs 2016, U.S. News Best Colleges for Veterans 2016, Princeton Review Best College in the Northeast 2016, and Money Magazine’s Best Colleges 2015–16. See a complete list of recognitions at merrimack.edu/about/recognition-rankings.



Left to right: Marybeth McInnis H’17 of the O’Brien Foundation, President Christopher E. Hopey, Cheryl Lucas and Jack Boyce ‘81 celebrating the donors at the Evening of Gratitude.

Merrimack Thanks Donors with “Evening of Gratitude”

Merrimack College celebrated the institution’s most generous donors on September 14 with the “Evening of Gratitude” ceremony. Each donor was recognized for their contribution to the Together for Good campaign – the largest fundraising effort in Merrimack’s history with a goal of reaching \$50 million.

“Gratitude is a two-way street,” said President Christopher E. Hopey, Ph.D. addressing the nearly 300 attendees. “As alumni and benefactors, you are grateful to Merrimack for the experiences and opportunities it has afforded you. So, in turn, the College takes this opportunity to publicly express our gratitude to all of you.”

Donors recognized during the ceremony include:

- Andrea ‘79 and Kenneth Robertson
- Bruce A. ‘79 and Sandra Bouchard
- David ‘81 and Joni Schelzi
- Dennis J. ‘77 and Norma J. Leonard
- Frank ‘62, H’62 and Henriette Girard
- James C. ‘75 and Christine M. Zampell ‘75
- John K. ‘73 and Deborah Pasini
- Kevin J. ‘89 and Karen Lucey
- Lee D. Slattery ‘81
- Mary Gorham Franco ‘81 and Michael J. Franco ‘81
- Mary Lou Casey Seidner ‘90 and Marc Seidner
- Maryann T. ‘81 and John T. Boyce ‘81
- Michael ‘92 H’17 P’17 Chairman and Kerridan Crowe P’17
- O’Brien Foundation and Marybeth McInnis H’17
- Paul L. and Joyce A. Mucci P’07
- PROCON (Jim Loft & Lance Bennett, Co-Presidents)
- Robert ‘71 and Kathleen Zatta
- Robert W. Forman ‘89
- The Merrimack Society
- The Wenzel Society

Upcoming Lectures Across Campus

During the fall semester, Merrimack will offer the following lectures and keynote addresses covering a variety of topics. Mark your calendars!

Events at The Writers House

Thursday, October 12 at 12:00 p.m. “Integration Nation: Immigrants, Refugees and America at Its Best” — book discussion with author Susan Eaton, Center for Advancement of Philanthropy at Brandeis University

Tuesday, October 24 at 4:00 p.m. “The Unspeakable: And Other Subjects of Discussion” — book discussion with author Meghan Daum, Fall Writer-in-Residence

Tuesday, November 14 at 4:00 p.m. “Beyond Words: What Animals Think and Feel” — book discussion with author Carl Safina, writer and conservationist

Spirituality Lecture Series

(all at Stevens Auditorium, Cushing Hall)

Tuesday, October 17 at 7:00 p.m. “Spirituality and Music” — with Professor Laura Pruett, associate professor/chair, Visual and Performing Arts

Tuesday, November 14 at 7:00 p.m. “How Photography Can Be Used to Understand the Universe” — with Kevin Salemme, director, Media Instructional Services

Tuesday, December 5 at 7:00 p.m. “Islamic Spirituality” — with Chaplain Shareda Hosein

Kyle McInnis Leading Newly Formed School of Health Sciences

Kyle McInnis has been named dean of the newly formed School of Health Sciences.

“Kyle has already done — and will continue to do — great things for the college in the field of health sciences,” said President Christopher E. Hopey, Ph.D. “We are excited to have him as dean of such an important and constantly growing part of our academic offerings.”

The program was a department in the School of Science and Engineering and had about 175 students when McInnis joined Merrimack as associate dean six years ago. Health Sciences now has about 15 faculty members and about 560 students, including about 100 graduate students.

“Over the past five-plus years we’ve experienced significant growth both in student enrollment at the graduate and undergraduate levels,” McInnis said. “We’ve also developed many new academic programs, hired new faculty, and taken many initiatives.”

Establishing Health Sciences separately from the School of Science and Engineering raises both the school’s and college’s profiles, he said. As the dean he is responsible for developing and setting the school’s strategic direction as well as mentoring faculty and staff, McInnis said. His goal is to create and strengthen an



environment that will help the school progress in reputation and enrollment.

McInnis has led in the planning for new facilities and equipment resources for teaching, learning and research since his arrival at Merrimack. He has also secured \$1.6 million in research funding from the prestigious Robert Wood Johnson Foundation for his nationally acclaimed Active Science program to help underserved children.

He previously was on faculty and was chairman of Exercise and Health Sciences at UMass Boston.

Health science is the application of science to improve the health of individuals and communities. Graduates are prepared to work in hospitals, non-profit organiza-

tions, government agencies, schools, and public health or administration. Most of Merrimack’s students are interested in working as physical therapists, physicians assistants and nursing, McInnis said. Others want to work in human performance, such as strength coaching and athletic training; public health and health promotion, and nutrition.

“Many are actually very interested in working in the business side of health care for companies such as Blue Cross Blue Shield and Partners Healthcare,” he said.

Leadership Changes Across Campus Will Better Align Institutional Goals

Merrimack has instituted several organizational changes to ensure the college is best positioned to meet key goals outlined in the Agenda for Distinction, President Hopey has announced.

Over the summer, college leadership recommended several changes to the President that would better align the academic, admission and student life framework. The changes are focused in student recruitment and retention, financial aid, and mission and ministry — areas critical to Merrimack’s success in today’s extremely competitive higher-education market.

“It’s imperative that we identify ways to maintain a competitive edge in the recruitment and retention of students,” Hopey said. “That starts with putting a highly functioning and coordinated administrative structure in place.”

In an effort to better align the college’s academic and mission priorities, the Office of Mission and Ministry, led by Father Raymond Dlugos, O.S.A, will now be working under the Office of the Provost to integrate academic goals with mission and ministry. This realignment will enhance the overall student experience and enliven Merrimack’s mission of enlightening minds, engaging hearts and empowering lives through the inspiration of the Catholic faith and the Augustinian tradition.

A second key move involves merging the college’s enrollment-management and student-affairs functions into a new unit called the Division of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs, to be led by a newly hired vice president, Tony Erwin, formerly associate vice president for enrollment and dean of student financial services at Northeastern University. Erwin brings nearly 20 years’ experience in the fields of student financial aid, employment, billing and enrollment management.

“Like many schools, we are trying to gain efficiency but most importantly, erase any disjoints between admissions and student affairs in order to make the student experience as seamless as possible,” said Hopey. “The ideal would be to create a synergy between the college’s admissions and student-affairs functions in order to seamlessly transition students to Merrimack.

“Tony is a very seasoned and highly regarded professional who will help greatly in this respect,” said Hopey.

Reporting to Erwin will be Darren Conine, who has been promoted to associate vice president of enrollment and dean of admission, and Allison Gill, associate vice president of student affairs and dean of students, and their respective staffs.

Erwin brings a wealth of experience in financial-aid modeling, the engine that drives much of the recruitment and retention process. During the 2017-18 academic year, Merrimack will spend more than \$62 million on student financial aid — the largest single line in the institution’s budget.

Correction

In the September 13, 2017 issue of the Record, in the article “Faculty Ranks Continue to Strengthen” Dan Vlahos’ credential should read M.F.A.

Evening of Gratitude

Continued from Page 1

During his remarks, President Hopey reported that the Together for Good campaign has raised more than \$42 million to date, with approximately \$14 million being raised since its public launch last fall.

“Holding a ceremony like this is important in the life of an institution. Such a ceremony is how a college marks its significant milestones,” said Hopey. “This ceremony demonstrates the love and support of our donors — those who have propelled the largest fundraising effort in the college’s history that will make lasting and meaningful impacts on current and future generations.”

The ceremony included the recognition of several leading donors whose contributions to the Together for Good campaign have been instrumental in reaching this important milestone in the campaign.

In addition, the evening hosted two individuals who were inducted into the inaugural Distinguished Alumni Hall of Fame due to their generous gifts that have been most impactful to the college over time. The first, former Chairman of the Board, Frank Girard ’62 and his wife Henriette were recognized as becoming the first major benefactors of academics at Merrimack. Mr. Girard was honored for his gift to enhance the Girard School of Business as well as ensure professional opportunities for its students - including leading up to its new home now in the newly built Crowe Hall.

Board Chairman, Michael Crowe ’92 H’17 P’17 and his wife Kerridan P’17, were honored for bestowing the largest gift in the college’s history that led to the naming of the newest academic building on the institution’s campus. Chairman Crowe was thanked for his strategic partnership, advice and vision for the growth of Merrimack College. “Generations of Merrimack students will learn, grow and find their paths to success in this facility and the college is deeply grateful for the Crowe’s support,” concluded Hopey. The evening culminated with the official ribbon cutting of Crowe Hall.



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Independent Agency Gives (Re)Accreditation to three engineering programs

Accredited by the Engineering Accreditation Commission of ABET, Merrimack College's undergraduate electrical and civil engineering program has been reaccredited, and for the first time the mechanical engineering program has been accredited.

Mechanical engineering is the newest of Merrimack's engineering programs.

"I'm proud of Merrimack in that adding a program like mechanical engineering, they did it right," said associate professor Joel Kuszmaul, chairman of the civil engineering department.

Merrimack's mechanical engineering program was established in 2012, said associate professor Franco Capaldi, chairman of the Mechanical Engineering Department. The program had to graduate a class that had been in the program four years before it could earn accreditation. The accreditation received this summer is retroactive to the class of 2016.

"Having an accredited degree can be essential to getting a job," Kuszmaul said. "So no one has graduated without an accredited degree."

In earning accreditation, Merrimack was able to show ABET over \$2 million in physical improvements to Mendel Center and the addition of highly regarded instructors, including those who have recently earned their doctorates and others who have years of industrial experience, said Science and Engineering Department Dean Cindy McGowan.

"The investment of faculty is big. It's a great commitment by the college," she

said. "The quality of faculty hired has been excellent."

ABET is a nonprofit, non-governmental accrediting agency for programs in engineering and engineering technology, as well as in applied and natural science, and computing. It's recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation. Requirements for accreditation are much more stringent than those required for New England Association of Schools and Colleges, said associate professor Jack Adams, chairman of the electrical engineering program.

ABET collects essential measurements of competence, including data showing the programs are always improving. Accreditation and reaccreditation require similar stringent examination by ABET. They are good for six years.

The three program are already collecting data for the next accreditation in six years, Adams said.

There are about 140 mechanical engineering students, about 113 civil engineering students and about 70 electrical engineering students this semester.



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