Dear Alumni,

The word “alumnus” has its roots in the Latin verb “to nourish”; I would like to take this moment to consider the multiple implications of what it means both to nourish and be nourished. The alumni of an educational institution have been nourished by the school, college, or university from which they graduated. They were nourished intellectually, socially, emotionally as they undertook their journey of self-discovery and acquisition of crucial life skills.

But alumni can also be regarded as those who provide nourishment. It is this dimension of “nourish” that I wish to explore with you. There are myriad ways in which you as alumni can nourish our current students and faculty. When you return to campus and speak about your work – as a graduate student or professional in the workplace – you help our current Honors College students imagine possible futures for themselves. When you are invited to be a guest speaker for an Honors seminar to share your expertise in, say, epidemiology, law, library sciences, scriptwriting, human rights, or robotics, you confirm for our students that some day they, too, will be able to embody the confidence you display and take pride in the impact their work has in the world. Alumni provide long-term nourishment because they enable the sustenance of dreams; they can also help clarify and even make possible the emergence of a dream.

Faculty and staff, too, can be energized and reinvigorated by alumni; they are nourished by visits and appreciation from alumni, who speak of their transformative experiences in certain courses or their life-changing conversations with particular faculty and staff mentors. The interactions between alumni and the institutions from which they graduate should never be transactional. A truly meaningful connection between alumni and the campus is long-term, relational, and mutually enriching. We invite your ideas on how you would like to initiate and maintain a life-long relationship with the Honors College at UMass Boston.

Sincerely, and always with deep appreciation,

Rajini Srikanth
Dean, Honors College
Professor, English
The Honors College hosted five of its alumni for the Fall Semester Alumni Panel on October 7. The alumni spoke of how their experiences during their respective undergraduate careers helped them achieve success across a multitude of fields.

Our visiting alumni included Abrar Ahmed, ’16, Ciera Burnett ’07, Haydy George ’15, Nate Goudreault ’17 and Hayden Hutto ’14. They each represented various postgraduate pursuits, including lab operation, law, and technical writing. Each panelist provided important insight about how their time at UMass Boston was shaped by the resources and opportunities that they received for personal and professional support. In speaking to second year Psychology student Neil Arquillano about how this event was important for him to attend, he explained it was “enlightening” and that “seeing some of their [the alumni’s] majors and how unique their jobs were showed me that I’m not trapped to a certain career path.”

The Honors College is proud to host an Alumni Panel each semester and if you would like information on how to be involved for the next panel series, please email either Abby Cheng at abby.cheng@umb.edu or Caitlin Ferrarini at Caitlin.ferrarini@umb.edu
UMass Boston junior Urwah Kanwal, the winner of this year’s John W. Ryan Award, plans to earn an MD/PhD after graduation so that she can help lower health care costs.

“I think it’s connected with research. So if we do research and we get to know the cheapest way to get medicines, then doctors can play their role. So that’s my goal,” Kanwal said.

The Ryan Award is an honor given to the UMass Boston junior with the highest GPA after their freshman and sophomore years. Kanwal, a junior biology major in the College of Science and Mathematics who is also in the Honors College, has a 4.0 GPA. She is receiving the honor during convocation.

Kanwal was born in Pakistan and is fluent in Urdu, her first language. She and her family moved to Barnstable when she was a junior in high school—they now live in Malden.

“The poor? They just wait for doctors for hours and hours,” she said. “I don’t want to work in a specific place. I want to work anywhere where it is needed.”

In September, Kanwal started working 10 hours a week in Assistant Professor of Biology Shailja Pathania’s Lab, which aims to understand how and when normal, presumably healthy cells become breast cancer tumor cells and use this knowledge to design better preventive and therapeutic treatment strategies. Also on-campus, Kanwal is an active member of Phi Delta Epsilon International Medical Fraternity (PhiDE); off-campus she is in the Medical Career Exploration Program at Brigham and Women’s Hospital and she mentors fourth through seventh graders through a program at MIT.

Growing up in Pakistan, I saw people who wouldn’t get medical aid at all just because they didn’t have money. … The poor? They just wait for doctors for hours and hours,” Kanwal said. “I don’t want to work in a specific place. I want to work anywhere where it is needed.”
As a Physics major and member of the Honors College, Joseph Farah contributed over 4,000 hours of research to the Event Horizon Telescope (EHT), which captured the first ever image of a black hole. On a team of 347 members, Farah was the only undergraduate researcher sharing in this work. Farah has also received the prestigious Barry M. Goldwater Scholarship, which is a national award and one of the highest recognitions for achievement in science and mathematics. Additionally, Farah’s research is furthered by his opportunity as a Smithsonian Fellow at the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics. Beyond his influence as a current undergraduate at UMass Boston and other institutions, Farah hopes to continue his work by pursuing a doctoral degree in Physics.

New and returning students had the opportunity to visit the new Honors College space during an Ice Cream Social held on September 23. The Honors College recently relocated from the second floor of the Campus Center to the fourth floor of Wheatley. One of the most convenient parts of this move that now the Honors College is situated adjacent to both the College of Science and Mathematics (CSM) Student Success Center and the College of Liberal Arts (CLA) Advising. With this in mind, many Honors College students will now be able to visit both their Honors advisor and major-specific advisor much easier. Aside from acknowledging this move, this event was a valuable time to connect, while playing games and enjoying frozen treats, with Honors faculty and staff as everyone began another dynamic semester.
Through a partnership between the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston and UMass Boston, students had the chance to visit the MFA on Thursday, October 24. This special event included a scavenger hunt where students were encouraged to visit different galleries based on a series of over 60 clues. Two of the current exhibitions, *Women Take the Floor* and *Ancient Nubia Now*, were among the most popular. *Women Take the Floor* (September 13, 2019-May 3, 2021) explores the vision and voice of women as demonstrated in art throughout history. *Ancient Nubia Now* (October 13, 2019-January 20, 2020) displays pieces of sculpture, jewelry and textiles in order to articulate how Nubia has contemporary influence. In attending such an informative and engaging experience, students were eager to share how this supplemented their passions in the classroom. Nikki, a first-year Honors College student detailed how this evening, “let me step outside my comfort zone and analyze pieces of artwork in a way I never would have necessarily on my own. I really want to take an art history class now.”

“*Ubi Girl From Tai Region*”

*Lois Mailou Jones (1905-1998)*

*The Hayden Collection* - *Charles Henry Hayden Fund, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston*