

# ACHIEVER



# VIEW FROM THE TOP



## DEAR FRIEND:

As UMUC celebrates its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary, I think it's fitting to reflect on our history of service—a history of which we can be justifiably proud.

UMUC was established in the 1940s to serve the needs of adults in post-

war America, many of whom were returning from bloody battlefields in Europe and the Pacific, longing to reclaim their peacetime lives and rekindle their dreams. They turned to higher education for the advantages that would allow them to advance in a competitive workforce, and UMUC responded—offering the instruction they needed at places and times that accommodated their busy lives.

Today, commitment to service continues at UMUC. We remain a leader in education for the military and were named a leading provider of higher education to minority students by *Black Issues in Higher Education*.

That commitment is reflected in our graduates, this university's greatest legacy. In the pages that follow, you'll meet three of those graduates—all three remarkable leaders and civil servants. Charles Roe had a career as a military pilot cut short when he was injured in the terrorist attack on the Pentagon on September 11, 2001. Refusing to harbor bitterness, he now works as a cartographer for the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), helping ensure our safe air travel.

Walter Somerville worked for more than 40 years to promote and protect civil rights in the U.S. Coast Guard, and his efforts impacted other agencies in the federal government. Now he has endowed a scholarship fund that will help underprivileged students afford a college education for years to come. And Mary Tanner left an enviable position in the Smithsonian Institution's popular Museum of Natural History to help oversee a renaissance at the National Zoo, which had been all but crippled by federal budget cuts.

It's all in this issue of *Achiever*. As you read it, please join me in saying a collective thank you to all around us who serve their country and their community every day.

Sincerely,

SUSAN C. ALDRIDGE, PhD  
PRESIDENT  
UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

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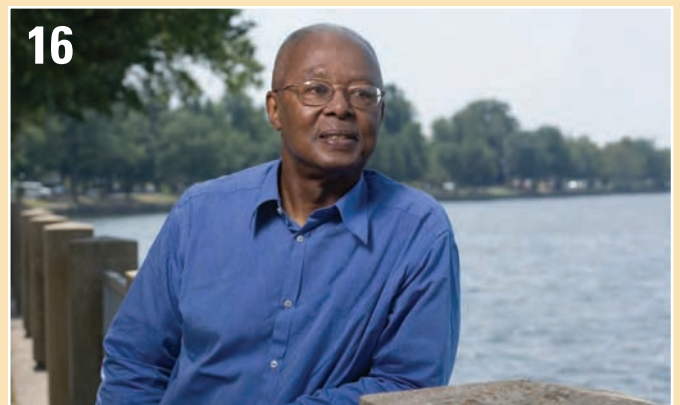
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After a lifetime of service, Walter Somerville turned to UMUC for a way to continue his legacy of doing good.





## UMUC COMMUNITY SHOWS ITS SUPPORT FOR VIRGINIA TECH

BY CHIP CASSANO

UMUC President Susan C. Aldridge joined the worldwide UMUC family of students, faculty, staff, and alumni in observing a moment of silence at noon on Monday, April 23, 2007, in memory of the 32 students and faculty members of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University—commonly known as Virginia Tech—who lost their lives in the tragic violence of April 16.

“As we try to come to grips with our own feelings and anxieties, our thoughts and prayers extend first and foremost to the students, the families, the faculty, and all of the members of the Virginia Tech community as they begin to cope with the enormity of their losses,” said Aldridge. “This is a tragedy of unimaginable proportions. It is difficult to make sense of such a senseless act, and we grieve deeply for victim’s families and for their friends.”



Interim Provost Larry Leak read the names of the victims as faculty and staff representatives came forward to place 32 roses in memory of the 32 victims of the tragedy.

Several hundred staff and faculty members gathered in the courtyard of UMUC’s Adelphi, Maryland, headquarters for a brief ceremony.

Lawrence Leak, UMUC’s interim provost and chief academic officer, read the names of the victims as a bell tolled 32 times and volunteers from across the university came forward to lay 32 roses—in shades of orange and maroon, Virginia Tech’s colors—at the base of the UMUC sculpture that stands at the center of the courtyard.

“The loss of so many lives at Virginia Tech reminds us how fragile our lives can be,” said Aldridge. “This is a tragedy that will be with all of us for decades to come.”

## UMUC GRADUATE SCHOOL UNVEILS UPDATED CURRICULUM

BY ALLAN ZACKOWITZ

The UMUC Graduate School of Management and Technology recently unveiled one of its most extensive curriculum changes in years.

The changes, which affect all graduate level degree and certificate programs, are the result of a two-year review

process designed to ensure that UMUC continues to meet the evolving educational demands of today’s global marketplace and its increasingly competitive and technological work environment. The review committee considered course content, as well as new tools and techniques that could enhance classroom and online learning.

“Adult career education is the fastest-growing sector of the education field,” said Dr. Michael Frank, dean of the Graduate School, “and we must meet critical benchmarks in each field of study.”

Graduate degree and certificate programs are now more highly focused on specific career fields, and major course realignments reflect new career mapping methods that make it easier for students to determine which programs will be most directly applicable to their own career objectives. Course requirements have also been streamlined across all disciplines, in some cases cutting the number of credits needed or eliminating outdated introductory courses.

New areas of specialization have also been added to many of the existing programs, and several new program options represent attractive opportunities that were not previously available. This includes many new dual degree programs that make it possible to earn two complementary degrees in less time—and at a lower cost—than earning them separately.

“The Graduate School remains committed to doing everything possible to offer students the right selection of programs and to ensure that each student reaches his or her highest career and lifetime



## UMUC VIRTUAL DRAGONS WIN GOLD—AGAIN!

BY CHIP CASSANO

On Saturday and Sunday, May 19 and 20, 2007, the UMUC Virtual Dragons raced in the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Washington D.C. Dragon Boat Festival on the Potomac River, winning a gold medal in the 250-meter Division B Open Race. UMUC has competed in the race every year since it first came to Washington in 2002; the university first brought home a gold medal in 2005.



This year, the Virtual Dragons also raced against several teams in the 500-meter event, reaching the finals. Although they didn't win the gold, UMUC President Susan Aldridge praised the team for exemplifying sportsmanship, leadership, and teamwork, and members of one Taiwanese team sought out the Virtual Dragons to exchange team shirts—an honor bestowed on worthy opponents.

For more about the colorful D.C. Dragon Boat Festival, visit [www.dragonboatdc.com](http://www.dragonboatdc.com).

goals in the shortest amount of time possible," said Frank.

More information about the updated Graduate School curriculum can be found online at [www.umuc.edu/grad](http://www.umuc.edu/grad).

## UMUC ALUMNI ASSOCIATION WELCOMES KIRK W. CLEAR AS PRESIDENT

BY CHIP CASSANO

Master Sgt. Kirk W. Clear (U.S. Air Force, Ret.), assumed the presidency of the University of Maryland University College (UMUC) Alumni Association on June 22, 2007, representing more than 125,000 alumni worldwide.

Clear, a native of Buffalo, New York, and a graduate of UMUC and of the comm-

unity College of the Air Force and the S. I. Newhouse School of Public Communications at Syracuse University, has a long history of service at UMUC. As a UMUC student, he chaired the Student Advisory Council and served on the University Advisory Council's executive committee, representing UMUC's student body to the university president, provost, and other senior administrators and faculty. University officials chose Clear to represent UMUC on the Maryland Higher Education Committee's Student Advisory Council, and he served as the student representative on the Drazek Teaching Excellence Awards and Teaching Recognition



**Master Sgt. Kirk W. Clear (U.S. Air Force, Ret.) has a long history of active and enthusiastic support of UMUC.**

Awards Committee. In May 2003, when he graduated from UMUC *summa cum laude*, Clear was chosen to present the student address,

speaking to more than 10,000 guests and graduates at the Comcast Center in College Park, Maryland.

Clear has been featured in several UMUC publications, including the university's annual president's report. He spoke on behalf of UMUC at the National Press Club following a Sloan Foundation study focused on online education, and he was a guest speaker and panelist in UMUC's *Washington Post* Lecture Series, addressing military and veterans affairs.

Clear's 22-year military career took him around the country and around the world to posts in Maryland, California, Mississippi, Texas, Virginia, Iceland, Iraq, Italy, Kuwait, Oman, and Saudi Arabia. During most of that time, he served as an Air Force historian and public affairs practitioner. He retired in 2007 as superintendent of

the Public Affairs Office at Andrews Air Force Base in Maryland—the home of Air Force One.

Currently, Clear is a communications manager for Performance Management Consulting, Inc., working on an IT modernization project for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement in the Department of Homeland Security in Washington, D.C. Clear, an eight-time All-American swimmer, is married with three daughters and enjoys golf, ice hockey, and swimming.

## UMUC CELEBRATES COMMENCEMENT WORLDWIDE IN 2007

BY CHIP CASSANO

University of Maryland University College kicked off commencement season in 2007 with an April 21 ceremony in Tokyo, Japan, followed by ceremonies in Seoul, Korea, on May 5; Adelphi, Maryland, on May 12; Heidelberg, Germany, on May 27; and, coming full circle, a final ceremony on Okinawa on June 16. All told, more than 7,500 students graduated worldwide—over 750 in Asia and 1,100 in Europe, with the remainder (more than 5,000) graduating stateside.

A variety of dignitaries spoke at the ceremonies, including University System of Maryland Chancellor William E. Kirwan in Heidelberg; the Honorable J. Thomas Schieffer, U.S. ambassador to Japan, in Tokyo; and the Honorable Alexander Vershbow, U.S.



President Susan C. Aldridge congratulates honorary degree recipients Norman B. Anderson (above) and Deryl McKissack (right) at the May 12 ceremony in Adelphi, Maryland. The U.S. ambassadors to Japan and Korea, the Honorable J. Thomas Schieffer and the Honorable Alexander Vershbow, also received honorary degrees.



ambassador to Korea, In Seoul.

In Adelphi, where in recent years the commencement ceremony has been divided into morning and afternoon events to accommodate UMUC's continued growth, graduates and guests were treated to presentations by two speakers who shared their unique perspectives on life, work, and the secrets of success.

Deryl McKissack, president and CEO of McKissack & McKissack, an architectural and environmental engineering and program management firm, addressed the morning graduates. McKissack's company—the oldest minority-owned architecture and engineering firm in the United States—has overseen such high-profile Washington area projects as the restorations of the Jefferson and Lincoln memorials, the renovation of RFK Stadium, and construction of the Washington Con-

vention Center. More recently, the firm has partnered with several construction companies to form a design-build team that has been contracted to create a permanent memorial to Martin Luther King Jr. on the National Mall.

Norman B. Anderson, who presented the afternoon keynote address, is CEO of the American Psychological Association, the largest and oldest of the world's psychological associations. Anderson is the former and founding associate director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and was the first director of the NIH Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research.

A graduate of North Carolina Central University and the University of North Carolina–Greensboro, he is the author of several books and has held faculty appointments at the Harvard School of Public Health and Duke

University School of Medicine.

Both McKissack and Anderson were awarded honorary Doctor of Public Service degrees by UMUC in recognition of their accomplishments and contributions to society.

## GORDON WARNER NAMED UMUC PROFESSOR EMERITUS

BY CHIP CASSANO

In July 2007, UMUC President Susan C. Aldridge—with the support of the university provost, Dr. Lawrence Leak—bestowed the distinction of professor emeritus on Dr. Gordon Warner. Warner first joined the UMUC faculty in 1959 and, over the next 35 years, taught a variety of courses in Asian studies, history, and introductory speech communication.

“Your thoughtful consideration of the students, faculty, and staff has been an asset to the university for the decades that you have taught for us,” wrote Aldridge, in a letter announcing the honor. “Your



sincere concern for others is admirable and will surely be missed. Your distinguished career, spanning decades, contributed to the UMUC students, as well as to the people-to-people relationships between the United States and Japan."

Warner, now retired, enjoyed a long and distinguished career that stretched back to the 1930s, when he graduated from the University of Southern California and was commissioned as an officer in the U.S. Marine Corps. He was initially placed on reserve status, and traveled to Japan for the first time in 1937. There, he pursued his education and training in kendo—the art of Japanese swordsmanship—an interest he developed as a teenager growing up in southern California.

As international tensions increased, Warner returned to the United States to resume his duties in the Marine Corps. He saw heavy combat in Bougainville, in the Solomon Islands, and sustained severe injuries, but eventually resumed his training in kendo, achieving the high rank of *kyu-dan* (ninth

*dan*) and publishing several highly regarded books on the art. In 2001, the Japanese government awarded him the Third Class Order of the Sacred Treasure in recognition of his contribution to Japanese-American relations through his involvement and promotion of kendo.

After the war, Warner completed two master's degrees—one in speech communication and one in history—from the University of Southern California, and went on to earn his EdD from the University of California, Berkeley. Returning to Japan, he held a series of government positions, including director of the education department of the U.S. Civil Administration of the Ryukyu Islands. After the Ryukyu Islands reverted to Japanese rule, Warner was appointed U.S. Army command historian for the islands.

Warner lived in Asia for years and came to be recognized as an authority on World War II history and in particular on the war in the Pacific and the fierce battle for Okinawa near the end of the war. At UMUC, he created and frequently taught a short course on the battle

and published a book—*The Okinawa War* (Ikemiya Shokai, 1985)—that offers detailed coverage of the conflict.

Warner, now retired, lives in Okinawa.

**Professor Emeritus Gordon Warner (left) greets President Susan C. Aldridge as Dr. William Beck (second from left), area director for Okinawa, Guam, and Micronesia, and Dr. Lorraine Suzuki (far right), interim vice president, UMUC Asia, look on.**



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# MONKEY BUSINESS

... porcupine business, panda business, and sloth business—  
it's all serious business for  
MARY RAKOW TANNER,  
deputy director of the National Zoo and a  
graduate of UMUC's popular business program.

BY CHIP CASSANO





Asian small-clawed otters keep a close eye on Mary Tanner, the zoo's deputy director. The otters, along with Lao Mei, a red panda (opposite page, top), are part of the new Asia Trail exhibit. The zoo offers visitors a glimpse into the lives of hundreds of other exotic animals, like Cora, a prehensile-tailed porcupine (opposite page, bottom).



**T**oday, a peaceful stroll along the tree-lined pathways of the Smithsonian’s National Zoological Park in Washington, D.C., is rarely disrupted by anything more unexpected than the laughter of children or the screech of a monkey or exotic bird. The zoo’s star occupants—the giant pandas Mei Xiang and Tian Tian, along with their celebrity cub, Tai Shan—munch bamboo leaves in the state-of-the-art, climate-controlled Fujifilm Giant Panda Habitat, their antics webcast worldwide via “Panda Cam.” It’s hard to believe that the 163-acre sanctuary in downtown Washington—home to more than 2,000 animals made up of 400 different species, and one of the area’s most popular tourist destinations—was facing a crisis less than five years ago.

But a crisis is the only way to describe what greeted Mary Rakow Tanner—a 1978 graduate of UMUC’s business program—when she took the position of deputy director of the National Zoo in the fall of 2002. The zoo, part of the famed

Smithsonian Institution, charges no admission and depends heavily on federal funding. It’s a larger organization than meets the eye—a 3,200-acre facility in Front Royal, Virginia, serves as an auxiliary research center and breeding ground for endangered species—and 15 years of governmental downsizing had taken a toll, all but crippling operations.

“When I first came to visit before I got the job, I went on what we called a ‘terrible tour,’” said Tanner. “The upper part of the zoo was empty, closed to the public. The sloth bears—which are right outside my office now, in part of the new Asia Trail—were in an exhibit that was built in 1898 and was on the verge of being condemned, and there were buckets everywhere in the Elephant House because the roof leaked.”

But Tanner had decades of administrative experience behind her, having worked at the National Air and Space Museum, the Museum of Natural History, and Smithsonian headquarters. The zoo needed her expertise. She was willing to tackle the job.

**Asian small-clawed otters (above) are threatened by the destruction of their habitat, hunting, and pollution. As part of her job, Mary Tanner (opposite page) works to secure the resources zoo scientists need to study and protect at-risk species.**



“I figured, ‘Well, I worked for Natural History, where the budget and staff were twice as large; I ought to be able to handle the National Zoo,’” said Tanner. “Little did I know what I was getting into.”

The wakeup call came just a few months into her tenure, when tragedy struck.

“My life really changed on January 11, 2003,” said Tanner. “That was the day we lost the red pandas.” An outside contractor—unlicensed in the District of Columbia—had applied a powerful pesticide inside the red panda’s enclosure as part of an effort to control a rat infestation. Two endangered red pandas died of poisoning—a sad and entirely preventable accident that was clearly symptomatic of various management problems—some stemming from the budget and staffing cuts imposed on the zoo. A National Academy of Science study uncovered other troubling, system-wide concerns and ultimately led to the resigna-

“My life really changed on January 11, 2003,” said Tanner. “That was the day we lost the red pandas.”

tion of the zoo’s director, but it seemed a tipping point had been reached.

“Sometimes you need something shocking to wake everybody up,” said Tanner, “and that’s what this did. It helped draw attention to the fact that you can’t keep a place like this going—a place that requires 24-hour-a-day, seven-day-a-week attention—without providing a certain basic level of support.”

With new funding came new opportunities, and the zoo made quick strides in strengthening operations and infrastructure.

“We’ve been able to attract staff with years of experience to lead our animal programs office,” said Tanner. “We brought in one of the best nutritionists in the country, we’ve brought new blood into our animal care departments, and they in turn have helped train or retrain staff members who were thrown out there without much help before.

“It easily the most challenging job I’ve had,”

admitted Tanner.

Fortunately, it has also been one of the most rewarding.

“We’ve also gotten increased funding to care for and maintain the exhibits. We’ve put five new roofs on buildings—on the Elephant House, Amazonia, the Small Mammal House, the Ape House, and the Reptile House. We’ve renovated and reopened the Mane Restaurant, and we’ve opened the Kids’ Farm Exhibit, which is new and located in an area that was empty before.”

The results were immediate and often obvious, and some were unexpected, if nonetheless welcome. Within two weeks of installing a new roof on the Small Mammal House, complete with specially filtered glass skylights, the golden lion tamarins—a small, endangered monkey native to Brazil’s Atlantic coastal forest—changed color, from dull brown to bright orange.

Corporate partners have taken notice, too, and the zoo has attracted generous support from Fujifilm and others for the giant panda habitat and Asia Trail, which opened in October 2006 and now houses sloth bears, fishing cats, red pandas, a Japanese giant salamander, clouded leopards, Asian small-clawed otters, as well as the giant pandas.

There’s always more to be done, of course. The director of the zoo has identified four priorities going forward, with the best possible animal care topping the list, followed by educational initiatives, support for scientific research, and sustainability.

“We’re doing well in all four areas,” said Tanner, “but we still have a lot of work to do on sustainability. The Asia Trail won

## FACTS ABOUT THE NATIONAL ZOO

**F** The National Zoo’s 163-acre park in the heart of Washington, D.C., is home to approximately 2,000 animals representing nearly 400 species. More than 2 million people visited the zoo in 2006.

**F** Nearly a quarter of the animals at the National Zoo are endangered species, including giant pandas, Asian elephants, white-naped cranes, and gorillas.

**F** The National Zoo was one of the first zoos to establish a scientific research program. Today, zoo scientists conduct research on

reproductive biology, conservation biology, biodiversity monitoring, veterinary medicine, nutrition, behavior, ecology, and bird migration.

**F** The National Zoo has 180 species of trees, 850 species of woody shrubs and herbaceous plants, and 40 species of grasses; there are also 36 different species of bamboo.

**F** The National Zoo operates on a budget of more than \$50 million and maintains a staff of more than 300 between the Washington, D.C., and Front Royal, Virginia, facilities—including animal caretakers, veterinarians, scientists,



Mary Tanner admits that she's no expert when it comes to animals. She sees her role as a facilitator, making sure that those who know how to care for animals and protect endangered species have the resources they need to do their jobs. "That's what I'm here to do," she says.



an award for sustainability from the American Institute for Architects, and we plan on having a geothermal heating system in the new Elephant House. We're working with the Environmental Protection Agency and other organizations to find grant money to try some different things—we're hoping to be a great test site—and we hope to test a fuel cell to power the utilities in the panda habitat. So we're making progress, but we've still got a ways to go.

"It's easily the most challenging job I've had," admitted Tanner. Fortunately, it has also been one of the most rewarding.

"It might be kind of hard to see sometimes, from the outside, but the passion that goes into caring for the animals and the passion that goes into the work that the scientists do, it's just so uplifting," said Tanner.

"My husband says that one day they're going to find out that I don't really know that much about animals, but I figure that's not really my job. My job is to make sure that the people who really know how to care for the animals and how to help increase the population of endangered species have what they need to get their jobs done. That's what I'm here to do." ♦



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THE GROUND SURFACE

1000 FEET OR MORE ABOVE  
THE GROUND SURFACE



# STOP SIGNS FOR THE SKY

Despite sustaining serious injuries  
in the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001,  
Charles Roe continues to find ways to  
serve his country—and make the world  
a safer place for everyone.

BY AMANDA AGATSTEIN



**C**harles Roe is a retired U.S. Air Force pilot and a cartographer in the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) National Aeronautical Charting Office (NACO) within the U.S. Department of Transportation. In that role, he is responsible for publishing and distributing U.S. government civil aeronautical charts and flight information publications, as well as U.S. nautical charts and hydrographic charts. The office was created to meet civil and military aviation and FAA controller requirements.

“My role as a cartographer is focused on safety,” explained Roe. “The maps I help create and revise provide a roadmap for pilots; the goal, of course, is to keep them away from any kind of trouble and prevent emergency situations.”

Each year, Roe and his team plan and direct the construction and maintenance of approximately 15,000 different aeronautical maps and publications to support recreational, military, and commercial aviation. Many charts are revised and published every 28 days to keep up with changing aviation guidelines and new construction—

such as high rise buildings—that can alter flight routes. And each year, Roe’s office implements thousands of changes to maintain certified and safe airspace.

“Every time an aircraft inadvertently flies where it’s not supposed to, like over the White House or other high-security airspace, we must adjust our maps to prevent that from happening again,” said Roe. “We also update our maps daily as buildings come up or aircrafts need more controlled routes.”

It is a critical role that became even more critical when, on September 11, 2001, terrorists crashed commercial airliners into the World Trade Centers in New York and the Pentagon in Virginia. Roe felt the impact of those attacks more personally than most; he was working in the Pentagon on September 11 and sustained serious injuries in the attack—injuries that limited his mobility and threatened to derail his career and education.

“I was enrolled at UMUC in the Bachelor of Science in management degree program prior to September 11,” said Roe. “After I was injured, I worried about taking an extended period of time off from my studies, but UMUC proved to be very understanding. I was able to stay enrolled while I took time off to recuperate.”



Though it was a difficult task getting his life back to normal, Roe was determined to earn his bachelor’s degree. After a seven-month recovery period, he returned to UMUC to complete his degree and also made the switch from military pilot to cartographer. And he refused to harbor any bitterness.

“The way I see it, things happen,” said Roe. “After taking that time off, I was ready to get back to my life, and that included changing my career and earning my degree. Going back to classes could have been a difficult adjustment, but the instructors were so helpful. Plus, the online classes were so convenient. Even when I did take classes on site or go to one of the computer labs, my

**Charles Roe uses the expertise he gained as an Air Force pilot, officer, and team leader to make air travel safer—and also to provide support and encouragement to youth and injured military personnel. In April 2007, he received a VAMC Washington, D.C., Service Award (opposite page) for donating more than 3,000 hours of service to the Virginia Medical Center.**



mobility issues were always catered to. The staff was so willing to accommodate my needs so that I could continue with my courses.”

And though he could no longer serve as a military pilot, Roe found other ways to serve his country by volunteering at two veterans hospitals—Virginia Medical Center and Walter Reed Army Medical Center. In April 2007, he won a VAMC Washington, D.C., Service Award for donating more than 3,000 hours at the Virginia Medical Center.

“I know from experience what it’s like to be injured and need a hand,” said Roe. “So giving these veterans a hand—well, it’s the least I can do.”

Roe also supports the U.S. Air Force as a senior member of the Maryland Wing of the Civil Air Patrol (CAP), a nonprofit organization with more than 60,000 members nationwide. CAP volunteers perform 85 percent of continental U.S. inland search-and-rescue missions as tasked by the Air Force Rescue Coordination Center, and they also perform homeland security, disaster relief, and counter drug missions at the request of federal, state, and local agencies.

CAP supports the FAA’s National Transportation Safety Board by providing evidence monitoring and surveillance services. Roe and his CAP unit respond to search-and-rescue missions as well as site surveillance missions following aircraft crashes. Recently, for instance, Roe and his unit arrived at the crash site of a single engine Piper Tomahawk shortly after the pilot had been taken to the hospital.

“Our role was to investigate the crash scene and help determine what happened,” said Roe. “Earlier that day, we were tasked to find an ELT [emergency locator transmitter] in Maryland. When a signal was detected in Tipton Airfield in Laurel, we went straight to the scene to establish a surveillance monitoring post.”

Roe also works with the CAP Cadet program, which helps young people 12–21 years of age explore opportunities in the military



He was working  
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and aviation industries. Under the watchful eye of mentors like Roe, cadets progress through a 16-step program of leadership and aerospace education.

“It’s satisfying to be able to pass my knowledge and experience as a former military pilot on to kids,” said Roe. “I take them on tours of air control towers and teach them the fundamentals of aerospace education. This program really helps give them a head start if they decide to enter a related career field.”

Roe hopes that his mentorship will stir excitement in the cadets and that some will choose to pursue careers as aeronautical cartographers. He sees aerospace security as an increasingly important field that requires capable and enthusiastic employees.

“I don’t know if people realize how much we need maps to guide us and keep us safe,” Roe explained. “It’s like we’re building stop signs for the sky. And our safety depends on it.” ♦

# A LIFE AND A LEGACY

After a lifetime of service, Walter Somverville turned to UMUC to find a way to continue his legacy of doing good.

BY ALLAN ZACKOWITZ

**T**he Walter R. Somerville Endowment Scholarship Fund at UMUC will one day provide tuition assistance for several worthy UMUC students each year. But that's not what makes it remarkable. Many UMUC alumni choose to support the university and future students with similar gifts. What makes the Somerville endowment remarkable is the man behind it.



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Walter Raleigh Somerville Jr. is 77 now and retired from a distinguished 42-year career with the U.S. government. During that time, he worked tirelessly to make certain that those with skill and ambition had the opportunity—and the right—to advance as far as they wanted in their chosen professions without having to overcome artificial barriers due to race, upbringing, or financial means. Along the way, he rose to the highest levels of government service, earned awards and accolades as a leader in the civil rights community, and merited listings in *Who's Who in Government* and *Who's Who in America*.

Somerville's own life stands as a testimony to the impact of his efforts. Born in Macon, North Carolina, Somerville and his family soon moved to Baltimore, where he attended elementary and high school. Like many young African American men growing up in the early years of the Cold War, he saw the military as a ticket to higher education.

"I came from a family of four brothers and two sisters," said Somerville. "My father was a day laborer on the Western Maryland Railroad and worked in a laundry at night. He believed in education, but he only sent the girls to college, not the boys. The GI Bill and tuition assistance program in the Air Force was the way to go for me."

Somerville served nine years in the Air Force, including a year in Korea during the final months of the war. While enlisted, he trained for an administrative position in personnel, an occupational specialty that would become the basis of his entire career. After he was discharged from the military in 1960, he moved back to Baltimore, where he started attending college at night under the GI Bill and landed a civil service job as a personnel specialist, first with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and later with the Office of Economic Opportunity in Washington, D.C.

In 1967, Somerville joined the Office of the Secretary of Transportation where Secretary John Volpe was just beginning to establish the first departmental Office of Civil Rights. These were "exciting times," Somerville said, marked by great strides in increasing the representation of minorities in the department.

Commuting to work from Baltimore every day was a burden, though, so Somerville moved to

**Walter Somerville retired after a long and distinguished career of service—and immediately looked for ways to continue his legacy of helping others.**



Washington in 1967. When a counselor explained to him that he could transfer to UMUC, attend classes in the evening, and still qualify for GI Bill benefits, he jumped at the opportunity. He graduated from UMUC in 1970 with a bachelor's degree in business administration.

"It took me eight years to earn it," said Somerville, "but I realized I could do much more with a degree, . . . and I'll give you a stark example. The same year I graduated, I was offered a higher-level job. Later I competed for and won a spot in the Federal Executive Development Program, a one-year sabbatical, which allowed me to take developmental courses that helped my later advancement. My UMUC degree gave me more confidence to compete."

Soon, Somerville landed his first executive-level job as chief of the civilian equal opportunity division of the U.S. Coast Guard,



**Walter Somerville and his wife, Jean (center), with Rear Adm. Fred Ames (left) and Rear Adm. Robert Olson (right).**



then part of the Department of Transportation. (It is now part of the Department of Homeland Security.) He remained with the Coast Guard for the next 34 years. In 1983, he was appointed to the Senior Executive Service and assumed the responsibilities of assistant commandant for the Coast Guard's Civil Rights Program. In that position, which he filled until his retirement in 2004, he held the equivalent rank of Rear Admiral, the only civilian to occupy a flag officer's berth in the Coast Guard. He also served as a member of the Coast Guard Academy Board of Trustees.

Even as he was rising through the ranks, Somerville was aware of inequities in the system, and he turned his energy to correcting them.

"I observed that the Coast Guard had a dearth of minorities at high levels," he said,

"so I decided to try to do something to attract minorities and provide opportunities for those who wanted to pursue public service careers in the Coast Guard's officer corps."

A born visionary, Somerville developed programs that promoted a Coast Guard culture that valued diversity, and much of his civil rights doctrine has become a model for the other branches of the military and many federal agencies. He persuaded the Coast Guard to conduct a cultural audit as a foundation for a positive work environment, and developed a program to provide tuition assistance to students at predominantly Hispanic and historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs). He established the first Junior ROTC program in the Coast Guard and developed the Coast Guard Recruiting Initiative for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, enabling students of HBCUs to transfer to the Coast Guard Academy.

Somerville carried his efforts beyond the Coast Guard, as well. He is a member of the National Urban League's President's Club, Life Member of the National Urban League, and Golden Heritage Life Member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). He has received numerous awards, including the NAACP Benjamin L. Hooks Distinguished Service Award and NAACP Roy Wilkins Meritorious Service Award.

Upon his retirement, many in the Coast Guard hailed Somerville as a role model, including Rear Admiral Erroll Brown, the first African American to rise to flag officer rank in the Coast Guard. Norman Mineta, then Secretary of Transportation, also praised Somerville, calling the civil rights programs Somerville pioneered "the envy of other federal agencies."

But Somerville wasn't content to let his influence end with his retirement, and he turned to UMUC as an avenue for extending that influence.

"Some don't have the financial resources to go to college without assistance," Somerville explained. "I could not have gotten a college education without the GI assistance program, and I wanted to do something to help those who are in need of financial aid or come from socially disadvantaged communities."

The Walter R. Somerville Endowment Scholarship Fund is due to award its first scholarship in 2008, and although the fund is not restricted to minority recipients, given UMUC's large minority population, the likelihood is that minority students will be primary beneficiaries of his generosity. "That stimulated my interest," said Somerville.

It also let Somerville continue his long record of helping others—without the burden of a nine-to-five schedule.

"After 54 years of working, I needed a break," laughed Somerville. "I'm doing lots of reading, keeping in shape, and doing some pro bono financial counseling and tax preparation for disadvantaged families." He's also looking forward to spending time with his wife—Jean Renwick Nava—and enjoying the freedom that comes with retirement.

"I traveled a lot for the Coast Guard, visiting every state," Somerville continued, "but my wife, who was an assistant principal in a D.C. school, couldn't travel with me. Now we're both retired, and we can travel together. We're going to France soon." ♦



Rear Adm. Thomas Matteson (left) and Commandant Paul Yost (center) sign the U.S. Coast Guard's first Military Affirmation Action Plan, authored by Walter Somerville (right).



Walter Somerville receives the Department of Homeland Security Certificate of Service from Adm. Thomas Collins, Commandant, U.S. Coast Guard, for 54 years of service.

# CLASS NOTES

1980s

## **Nora Dabols Alamjamili '85**

Willards, Maryland, enjoys creating art, playing the piano, volunteering, and performing civic duties. She has been applying for hotel managerial positions in Ocean City, Maryland.

## **Darlene S. Klinksieck '85 & '92**

Raleigh, North Carolina, joined Hutchison Law Group PLLC in June 2006 as a trademark specialist. She graduated *summa cum laude* from UMUC in 1985 and earned her certificate in paralegal studies from UMUC in 1992.

## **Suzanne Jeannette Poorker '86**

Woodbridge, Virginia, was appointed chief of vehicle, equipment, and energy management at the U.S. Department of the Air Force.

## **Robert Hastings '86**

Montgomery Village, Maryland, received a 2006 Gold Quill Award for Excellence in Communications Management at the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) International Conference in Vancouver, Canada. He has served as vice president for communications at BAE Systems since 2001.

## **David Junior '87**

University Heights, Ohio, worked for the U.S. Office of Personnel Management after graduating from UMUC. He graduated from Officer Candidate School in 1989 and served as a platoon leader and supply officer in Korea and Fort Carson, Colorado. He earned a master's degree in operations management in 1994 and served as a company commander at Fort Lee, Virginia, and later served as professor of military science at John Carroll University in University Heights. He currently works as a project team member for Integrated Systems for Industrial Solutions (ISIS) and SAP for L'Oreal, USA. He wrote, "The skills and abilities I developed while attending UMUC are invaluable."

## **Catherine Nazarene '87**

Mount Airy, Maryland, has been an accountant and tax consultant since 1979 and began her

own tax practice in 1990. In 2005, she found her real passion—electrical work. She started Little Sparkie Electric and hopes to get into high-voltage and utility contracting in the future.

## **Larry L. Reynolds '87**

Silver Spring, Maryland, and his wife, Patricia, are in the process of building an 18<sup>th</sup>-century Chesapeake country home in Virginia, which they plan on opening as a bed-and-breakfast in 2007.

## **Frank Roth '87**

Waldorf, Maryland, retired from the U.S. Air Force in 2004 after 24 years of service. He currently works as a health care analyst for Tricare Management Activity and is married with three children.

## **Audrey Owens '88**

Chicago, Illinois, wrote, "UMUC provided me with the academic foundation for securing positions in leadership and management and empowered me with the ability to take courses on my schedule while working full-time and living hundreds of miles from campus."

## **Patricia Westlein '88**

Olney, Maryland, wrote, "UMUC's flexible and diverse program allowed me to complete my bachelor's degree while working at my full-time job and raising a family, ultimately preparing me to complete my MBA at George Washington University—before UMUC instituted their MBA program."

## **Martha Evans '89**

Dickinson, Texas, works as a realtor and wrote, "I'm up for a part in a film with Oprah Winfrey."

## **E. Reed Garland II '89**

Rockville, Maryland, has worked for 17 years in the telecommunications industry, first for MCI, then Bell Atlantic, then Verizon, then Nextel, and now for Sprint, where he is a senior project manager. He wrote to report that he got married in May 2007 in Leesburg, Virginia.

1990s

## **Bayani Dilag '90**

Honolulu, Hawaii, received the U.S. Air Force

Commendation Medal for outstanding achievement during his deployment to Iraq in 2006.

## **Johnny Jerome Mack Jr. '91**

Omaha, Nebraska, went on to earn an MS in computer information systems and an MBA after earning his undergraduate degree from UMUC. He was recently promoted to senior director of strategy management and engineering for Vertrue, Inc.

## **Betty Pelzer-Sharper '91**

Silver Spring, Maryland, retired from the federal government and currently works as an independent certified residential specialist for Re/Max. She wrote, "The flexible schedule that UMUC offers its students allowed me to earn my degree while working a full-time job and raising my family."

## **James Robert Vaillencourt '91**

Converse, Texas, wrote, "UMUC has provided me with an opportunity to accomplish something no one in my family has: graduate from college. The experience taught me how to learn, rounded me out as a person, and has opened up so many doors of opportunity that wouldn't have been available otherwise. As a retired Air Force master sergeant, I was always a proponent of higher education. Now, I work as a system administrator on a large government contract and am continuing my education."

## **Timothy Jerome Gough '97**

Mount Carmel, Tennessee, returned to the United States after earning his associate's degree from UMUC Europe. He earned his bachelor's degree from Crichton College in Tennessee and retired from the U.S. Navy in 2001. He went on to work for the Shelby County school system, but was recalled to active duty soon after. He served an additional two years and then earned his Master of Education from Trevecca Nazarene University in Nashville. He is currently pursuing a doctoral degree in education.

**Alona T. Raton '97**

Fort Worth, Texas, started attending class while in Azores, Portugal, and finished her degree in Naples, Italy. She wrote, "It is really worth taking the classes. It helped me pursue graduate studies with Oklahoma University, which I completed in 2004."

**Jacqueline DeCarlo '99**

Washington, D.C., received the 2007 Ayse I. Cardin Alumna in Residence Award from her undergraduate alma mater, Agnes Scott College in Decatur, Georgia, for her work on fair trade issues.

**2000s**

**Charles Todd Apple '00**

Panama City, Panama, credited his UMUC classes in Okinawa and Belgium for giving him a breadth of knowledge both in and out of the classroom that fostered critical thinking skills and helped him develop a more worldly philosophy of life. He currently works at the International School of Panama.

**Jessica Crandell '00**

Golden, Mississippi, moved four times since earning her Master of Science in computer systems management from UMUC in 2000. She currently lives on a 76-acre farm and is considering pursuing another master's degree online.

**Jonathan Kaster '02**

Eau Claire, Wisconsin, wrote, "The instructors at UMUC were great and I really appreciated the opportunity to complete my degree requirements through a distance education program."

**Fitzgerald L. Price '02**

Stockbridge, Georgia, retired from the U.S. Army in March 2007 following 31 years of service.

**Brenda Compton Turner '03**

Fort Washington, Maryland, wrote to

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# CLASS NOTES

report that her book, *Tithing: Need or Greed Part II—God's Way to Family and Financial Stability*, was chosen as Book of the Month last February by Heaven 1580 AM radio station. The first book in the series has sold out.

## **Mathew Gill '04**

Severna Park, Maryland, recently published his first novel, *Leaving the Canoe Club* (Booklocker.com, Inc., 2006). He plans to enroll in investigative forensics courses at UMUC to add more realism to his future novels.

## **James Hersh '04**

Takoma Park, Maryland, is a technical service manager for Victor O. Schinnerer & Company, Inc., a professional liability insurance underwriting company in Chevy Chase, Maryland. After retirement, he plans to earn a Doctor of Management and teach.

## **Janelle Elizabeth Taylor '04**

Washington, D.C., wrote, "I earned my bachelor's degree from UMUC while working for the government full-time as a secretary. After graduation, many doors opened for me because of

the great reputation UMUC has. I later used both my academic knowledge and work experience to start my own business at the age of 26. Currently, the business is flourishing."

## **William Jeffery Tussey '04**

San Diego, California, recently transitioned to a new position as the Predator MQ-1 aircraft team lead in specialty engineering with General Atomics Aeronautical Systems, Inc., in San Diego.

## **Jamie Lynn Duvall '05**

Annapolis, Maryland, wrote, "UMUC helped me ramp up my writing skills. When you take online classes, you sure do write a lot! I am currently pursuing my MBA, and I really feel that UMUC's method of teaching during my bachelor's degree program is helping me get through it."

## **Diane Kriemelmeyer '05**

Upper Marlboro, Maryland, is a doctoral candidate in health psychology and behavioral medicine at Northcentral University.

## **Frances Ann Rose '05**

Forestville, Maryland, wrote, "UMUC has been a great inspiration in planning for retirement. While working full-time, I have managed to open my own computer repair service. I have high hopes for completing my master's degree and then pursuing the next level of education."

## **Ronita Q. Yohe '05**

Suffolk, Virginia, wrote to report that she gave birth to a daughter, Kamryn Abigail, on September 23, 2006.

## **Lawrence Michael Cousins '06**

Middletown, Rhode Island, recently retired from the U.S. Navy and intends to move to Seattle, Washington, to continue his research in humanities. He completed his BA in humanities at UMUC in 2006, 33 years after beginning his degree program at the University of Oregon.

## **Shelly Fleming '06**

Eastampton, New Jersey, wrote that the professors at UMUC helped motivate her to

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## FACULTY KUDOS

**MONICA BOLESTA AND ROSEMARY HARTIGAN**, course managers for the MBA program in UMUC's Graduate School of Management and Technology, presented their article, "Fostering Critical Thinking and Critical Reframing of Assumptions in the Online Learning Environment" at the 12<sup>th</sup> Sloan-C International Conference on Asynchronous Learning Networks, November 8–10, 2006, in Orlando, Florida.

**BRYAN BOOTH, CHRIS HANNAH, AND PAMELA WITCHER**—all from UMUC's Graduate School of Management and Technology—developed a workshop that focuses on building faculty teams. The workshop was accepted for presentation at the Academy of Management.

**AGNES "GUSSIE" BOULDIN**, director of the Master of Science in health administration informatics program in UMUC's Graduate School of Management and Technology, was chosen as one of three distinguished alumni of 2007 by her alma mater, the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health.

**KATHLEEN EDWARDS**, program director of health care administration in UMUC's Graduate School of Management and Technology, continues to serve on the advisory boards of the MidAtlantic Health Leadership Institute and the MidAtlantic Public Health Training Center.

**EMMETT FLEMING**, a program director in UMUC's Graduate School of Management and Technology, has been chosen to serve as reviewer and referee for a paper—"From Contract to Collaboration: The Influence of Product Architecture upon Collaborative Relations Within the Automotive Design Chain"—submitted for publication to the *Journal of Purchasing and Supply Management*.

**TIMOTHY GREEN** published (with A. Brown) *The Essentials of Instructional Design: Connecting Fundamental Principles with Process and Practice* (Pearson Education, 2006), and (with M. Bray and A. Brown) *Technology and the Diverse Learner: A Guide to Classroom Practice* (Corwin Press, 2004).

**WAYNE LABEL**, who teaches accounting in UMUC's Graduate School of Management and Technology, was appointed to the Higher Education Advisory Committee of the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners.

**BRUCE LUBICH**, program director of accounting in UMUC's Graduate School of Management and Technology, was nominated to the board of directors of the Maryland Association of CPAs, effective July 1, 2007.

**STELLA PORTO**, acting chair of the information and technology systems department in UMUC's Graduate School of Management and Technology, presented "DPO Internet Safety: Basics and Concerns for Parents" on February 6, 2007, to parents from DeMatha Catholic High School and again on March 9, 2007, at St. Jerome's Middle School.

**JANE ROSS AND JAMES STEWART**, program directors in UMUC's Graduate School of Management and Technology, and faculty member **MAURICE HLADIK**, also of the Graduate School, presented "The Role of the Executive in Residence in an Online MBA Program" on August 10, 2006, at MERLOT 2006 in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.

**GAIL VIAMONTE**, chair of the teacher education department in UMUC's Graduate School of Management and Technology, was elected to the board of the Maryland Association of Colleges of Teacher Education.

pursue her MS in accounting and financial management after completing her bachelor's degree. She wrote, "It is definitely a challenge working full-time, handling a family, and pursuing a degree, but UMUC has made it easier to manage!"

### Tonya McCray '06

Waldorf, Maryland, works in the financial management unit of a labor union, dealing with cash transactions and general ledger. She wrote, "UMUC has afforded me the opportunity to

obtain the education that is needed to continue my career in treasury management."

### Kenneth Milberg '06

North Woodmere, New York, is president and principle consultant of Unix-Linux Solutions in Rockville Centre, New York, and works for an IBM business partner. He is also a technical editor for *IBM Systems Magazine* and a technology writer and Web site expert for TechTarget ([www.techtarget.com](http://www.techtarget.com)).

### Chigboromkpa Nwokorie '06

Hyattsville, Maryland, wrote, "Since I left UMUC, I have found the girl of my dreams and we hope to get married in 2007."

### Matthew Oberholtzer '06

Perryville, Maryland, accepted a position as environmental health and safety officer for Environmental Quality Resources, LLC, an ecological design and restoration firm in Baltimore, Maryland.

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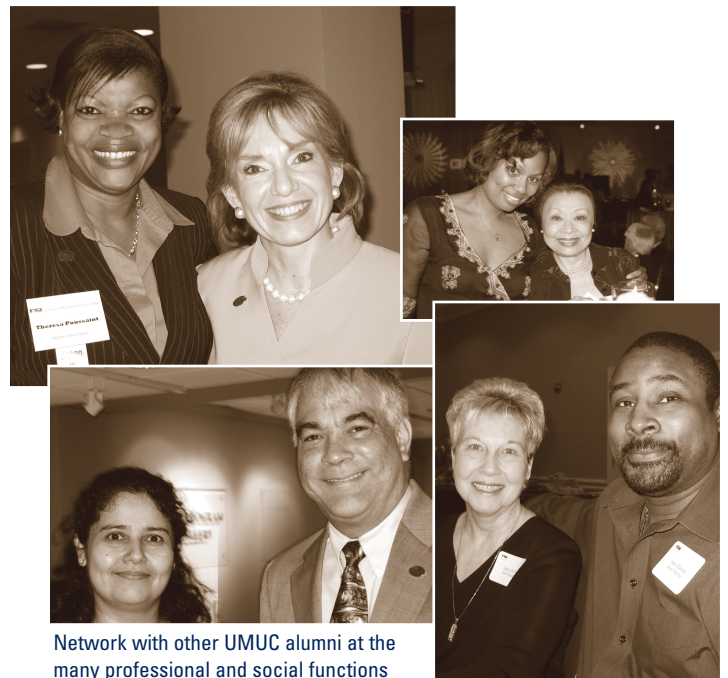
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\_\_\_\_\_  
E-MAIL ADDRESS

- No, I do not want to stay connected. Do not add my contact information to your mailing list.

## ALUMNI INFORMATION FORM

\_\_\_\_\_  
NAME GRADUATION YEAR

\_\_\_\_\_  
NAME USED WHILE ENROLLED AT UMUC (IF DIFFERENT FROM ABOVE)

\_\_\_\_\_  
MAJOR/PRIMARY SPECIALIZATION

\_\_\_\_\_  
STREET

\_\_\_\_\_  
CITY STATE ZIP + 4

\_\_\_\_\_  
COUNTRY

\_\_\_\_\_  
HOME PHONE HOME E-MAIL

\_\_\_\_\_  
COMPANY NAME

\_\_\_\_\_  
POSITION/TITLE

\_\_\_\_\_  
STREET

\_\_\_\_\_  
CITY STATE ZIP + 4

\_\_\_\_\_  
WORK PHONE WORK FAX

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