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**LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR MURRAY CELEBRATES CONSTRUCTION OF THE SCIENCE CENTER AT BRIDGEWATER STATE UNIVERSITY****Upgraded facility made possible by Patrick-Murray Administration \$2 billion bond bill for higher education**

BRIDGEWATER - Thursday, October 21, 2010 - As part of the Patrick-Murray Administration's commitment to improving public higher education in the Commonwealth, Lieutenant Governor Timothy P. Murray today visited the future site of an upgraded \$100 million facility to be named Conant Science and Mathematics Center at Bridgewater State University and joined university officials to meet with construction workers on site. Currently known as the Marshall Conant Science Building, upgrades to this new facility are being funded as part of the Administration's record \$2 billion bond bill to improve facilities across the state's 29 public institutions of higher education.

When completed, the \$100 million Science Center will provide specialized teaching and research opportunities in high-demand fields for Bridgewater's 11,000+ students. The original facility, constructed in the early 1960s, was built for a campus of approximately 800 total students. Today, Bridgewater State University is home to more than 800 science and mathematics majors alone and is the largest preparer of the new science teachers in the Commonwealth.

"Bridgewater State University is preparing the future generation of leaders for our Commonwealth," said Lieutenant Governor Murray. "The Governor and I are firmly committed to providing our public campuses with the resources and support they need to meet the growing demand of students with the same level of excellence they have provided for many years."

The Science Center received \$88.2 million from the 2008 Higher Education Bond Bill for the modernization and addition to the Marshall Conant Science Building. An additional \$13.5 million was committed in Fiscal Year 2010 to support the full cost of the project.

The \$100 million Science Center builds on news that Governor Patrick recently directed an additional \$2.9 million in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding to Bridgewater State University as part of his efforts to bolster funding for higher education across the Commonwealth. The additional \$2.9 million brings the total state and federal support to Bridgewater State this year to over \$36.8 million. Over the past two years, the Governor has directed over \$14 million in federal stimulus funds to Bridgewater State. The funds are being used to modernize an array of teaching and learning spaces and to make the campus more energy efficient.

"All of what we are doing at Bridgewater is focused around the singular goal of fostering a culture of academic excellence that is accessible to all," said Dr. Dana Mohler-Faria, President of Bridgewater State University. "From the construction of a new science building to the expansion of our studio space in Hunt Hall, we see these improvements as invaluable investments in the success of our students."

The announcement of the additional \$2.9 million for Bridgewater State is part of the Governor's work to direct an additional \$51 million in federal stimulus dollars to the Commonwealth's 29 institutions of public higher education, bringing total recovery funding for public campuses this year to \$71 million. Since 2008, the Governor has ensured that higher education received more than \$350 million from ARRA. The announcement also included an additional \$3 million to the state's scholarship program to help more students pay for higher education and \$750,000 to the Dual Enrollment program, which gives high school students an opportunity to study and receive credit for college level courses while still in school.

Bridgewater State is one of six state colleges that are now state universities thanks to the advocacy and action of the Patrick-Murray Administration. Proponents of the change have long argued that the added prestige of the university name will help students compete in the job market. Additionally, they predict that the renaming effort will attract non-state funding, such as foundation grants, and create new opportunities for alumni and corporate giving.

The Commonwealth has also invested deeply on the Bridgewater State campus, including the creation of the Center for International Engagement, the comprehensive renovation of the university's information technology core center, renovation of multiple general purpose classrooms outfitted with high-tech front-ends and significant renovations in the university's student center.

"I am very pleased to see the significant progress made on this state of the art math and science center. This center will ensure that the people of our region will be equipped with the skills they need to compete for the jobs of the future. This project will help attract high-tech businesses and jobs to southeastern Massachusetts. The Patrick-Murray Administration has once again demonstrated its commitment to investing in education and preparing our region for the jobs of today and tomorrow," said Senator Marc Pacheco.

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