



**Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Department  
Office of Governor Deval L. Patrick  
Press Release**

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**GOVERNOR PATRICK CONGRATULATES INCLUSIVE  
CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT PROGRAM STUDENTS  
AT BRIDGEWATER STATE UNIVERSITY**

*Program expands opportunities for students with intellectual disabilities at public college and university campuses*

BRIDGEWATER – Friday, May 23, 2014 – Governor Deval Patrick today joined Secretary of Education Matthew Malone in congratulating students enrolled in the Commonwealth’s Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment program on a successful 2014 academic year at Bridgewater State University.

“I am happy to be here today to celebrate the accomplishments of these incredible students,” said Governor Patrick. “The Commonwealth’s Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment program opens new doors to help students with intellectual disabilities overcome obstacles that can limit how far they can go in pursuing their education.”

The Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment program supports the academic, social and career goals for students with intellectual disabilities between the ages of 18-22 who were unable to pass the MCAS exam, a requirement to earn a high school diploma, but whose education remained under the authority of their local school district. The state-funded program provides resources to public two- and four-year colleges across the Commonwealth to bring these students onto their campuses. Since its inception in 2007, the program has involved 13 colleges and universities, and more than 700 participating students.

Bridgewater State Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment students have taken a variety of courses at the University this year, all intended to support their academic, social and career interests. Students have enrolled in many different courses including, Public Speaking, World History, Theater Appreciation, Music Fundamentals, Art and Physical Education. With the support of \$20,000 in grants provided by the Patrick Administration in January, Bridgewater State University recently announced it will also create residential opportunities for students with intellectual disabilities that will open in Fall 2016.

“Bridgewater State University, and the other public colleges and universities with ICE programs, are smart to invest in these students,” said Secretary Malone. “Our promise

and obligation is to educate all students and this program underscores our commitment. These students represent the true character of our public higher education system.”

The Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment program is managed by the Executive Office of Education, underscoring the Patrick administration’s commitment to the initiative and its benefits to students and communities. The program will announce a new round of grant competitions this month to expand the network of participating campuses. In addition to Bridgewater State, the University of Massachusetts Boston, the University of Massachusetts Amherst, Westfield State University, Roxbury Community College and Bunker Hill Community College all receive state funds run their Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment programs. Cape Cod Community College and Middlesex Community College were awarded planning grants to prepare launching their programs in the fall of 2015.

“As the first four-year higher education institution to offer the Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment Program, Bridgewater State University is proud to provide students with cognitive disabilities the same opportunity as their non-disabled peers to further their education and improve their prospects on the job market,” said Bridgewater State University President Dana Mohler-Faria. “Through the auditing of classes at BSU, I.C.E. students develop independence, participate within a college community, enhance their self-esteem, pursue their career goals, and learn important self-advocacy skills.”

“I was touched by the stories that were shared by students during the Higher Education Subcommittee tour on Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment,” said Senator Richard Moore, Chairman of the Joint Committee on Higher Education. “The inclusion of increased funding for ICE in the Senate budget re-affirms our continued commitment to ensuring access to higher education for all our students.”

“Our public colleges and universities were built to provide opportunity for men and women across the Commonwealth and it is exciting to see students of all abilities excel,” said Senator Marc R. Pacheco. “I am pleased to see the Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment program succeed at Bridgewater State University.”

“I join the Governor and Secretary Malone in congratulating those students enrolled in the Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment program on a successful academic year,” said Representative Alice Peisch, Chairwoman of the Joint Committee on Education. “The ICE program helps to ensure that students with intellectual disabilities are able to access higher education and builds upon the Commonwealth’s commitment to college and career readiness for all students. I look forward to seeing this program expand to more campuses across the Commonwealth in the years ahead.”

“Bridgewater State is a national leader in inclusive education for students with intellectual disabilities, and this celebration is a testament to that,” said Representative Tom Sannicandro. “We have a crisis of unemployment and underemployment for students with intellectual disabilities. With the opportunity to participate in college, these students have opportunities they’ve never had before to be employed, independent,

self-sufficient individuals. Not only does this benefit the students themselves, but it benefits all of us.”

“I am delighted that ten of our community college, state university and UMass campuses are engaged in Inclusive College Partnerships,” said Richard M. Freeland, Commissioner of Higher Education. “This shows a great commitment by the campuses to increasing access for all Massachusetts residents who aspire to learn.”

“This is a powerful experience for all involved simply because it reinforces the civic mission of area campuses and showcases the commitment to strong teaching and learning in support of diversity and equity,” said Glenn Gabbard, the recently appointed coordinator of the program for the Executive Office of Education. “Not only have students learned a great deal from this program, so have faculty, staff, and students with whom they work.”

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