

WILLIAM LANTIGUA: THE JAMES MICHAEL CURLEY OF LAWRENCE

CommonWealth

POLITICS, IDEAS & CIVIC LIFE IN MASSACHUSETTS

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Boston's power
structure still
excludes blacks,
Hispanics



FALL 2013

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Coverage from head to toe.



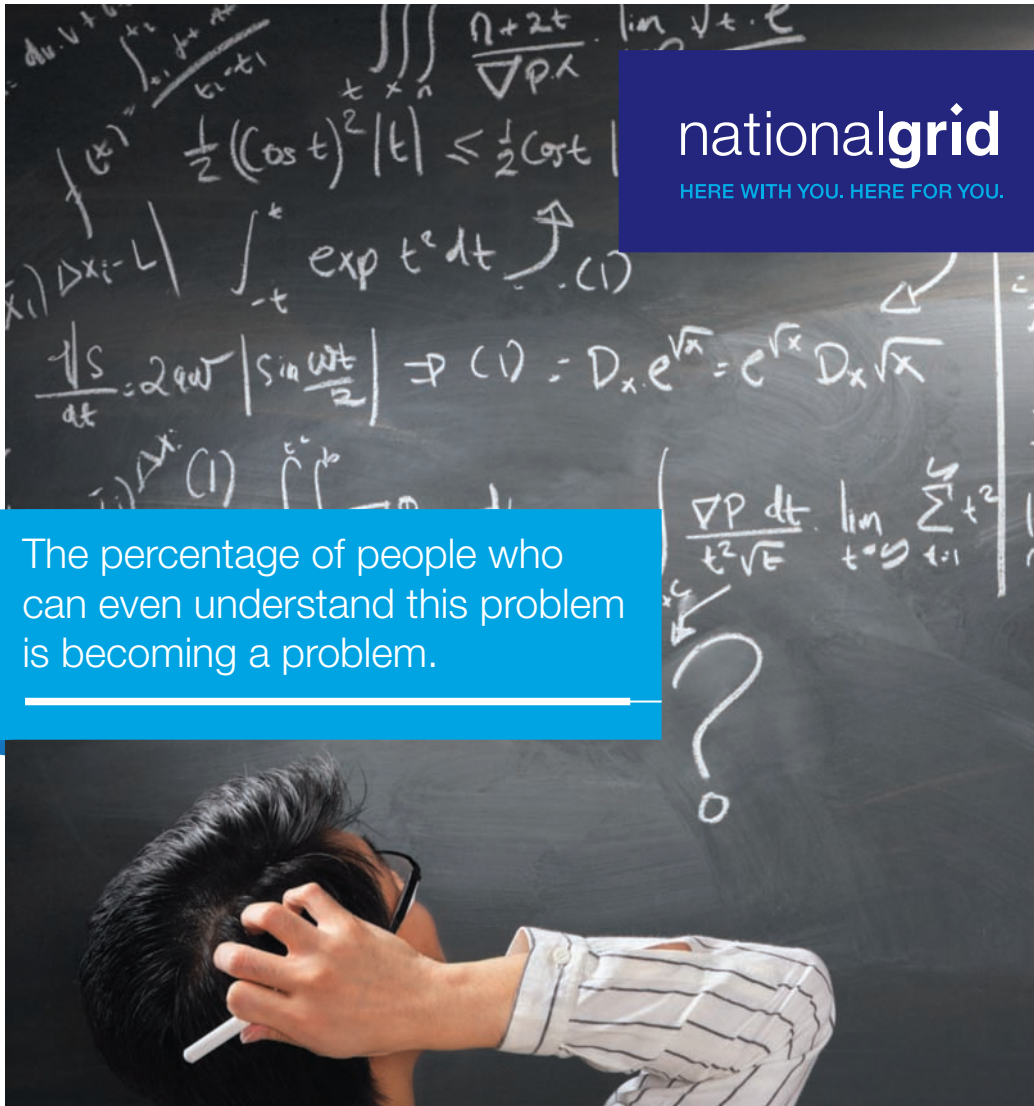
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➤ Full contents, as well as online exclusives, are available at www.commonwealthmagazine.org

CommonWealth (ISSN pending) is published quarterly by the Massachusetts Institute for a New Commonwealth (MassINC), 11 Beacon St., Suite 500, Boston, MA 02108. Telephone: 617-742-6800 ext. 109, fax: 617-589-0929. Volume 18, Number 4, Fall 2013. Third Class postage paid at Holliston, MA. To subscribe to *CommonWealth*, become a Friend of MassINC for \$75 per year and receive discounts on MassINC research reports and invitations to MassINC forums and events. Postmaster: Send address changes to Circulation Director, MassINC, 11 Beacon St., Suite 500, Boston, MA 02108. Letters to the editor accepted by email at editor@massinc.org. The views expressed in this publication are those of the authors and not necessarily those of MassINC's directors, advisors, or staff. *CommonWealth* is a registered federal trademark.

Education reporting in *CommonWealth* is sponsored in part by the Nellie Mae Education Foundation.

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REVIEWED BY MICHAEL JONAS



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FLYNN-KING RACE DESERVED MENTION

James Aloisi's article in the Summer issue of *CommonWealth* ("Fitting the Boston mayoral race into a historical context") offers an engaging account of the history of important transformational moments in Boston politics. (For Aloisi's entire series on past mayoral races, go to CommonWealth-magazine.org) However, his list of mayoral elections that were "critical milestones" during the 20th century surprisingly omits the 1983 contest, which may have been the most significant in setting the city on the course it is on today.

The elections that Aloisi identifies — 1909, 1913, 1949, 1959, and 1967 — were all significant for different reasons. Boston's history has long been the struggle over who gets what. The Irish in the 1909 and 1913 elections wrestled power away from the long dominant Yankee Brahmins to the benefit of the growing Irish, Italian, and Jewish immigrants and ushered in a period where their needs were addressed as they entered the middle class. The elections of 1949 and 1959 were a direct response to the crisis caused by federal policies of urban disinvestment in favor of the suburbs. The takeover of City Hall by the business-led governing coalition of Jerome Rappaport and his New Boston Committee on behalf of Mayor John Hynes was followed in short order by the Boston Coordinating Committee (The Vault), led by Ralph Lowell and the other white Yankee males, aiming to regain control of the city to promote their economic interests. The Vault supported Collins's election in 1959 and the hiring of Ed Logue, who Aloisi lauds as a visionary, as he implemented the systematic destruction of Boston's South End and West

End neighborhoods. Charlestown, South Boston, and Roxbury were also on the chopping block until a growing political resistance emerged.

In 1967, Kevin White was elected, in part, based upon his opposition to these policies and in direct response to the growing racial disparities in education, jobs, and housing policies created by the leaders of the prior governing regimes. White was right for the Boston of the time, but he, too, soon tired from the struggles of a changing city and looked to "move up" and away from the turbulent times. After abandoning his early liberal policies, he returned to the growth coalition model favored by the Vault, allowing the neighborhoods to starve while he focused on the rebirth of Quincy Market and growing the downtown skyline.

As pivotal as these races all were, certainly also worthy of inclusion was the 1983 election, when nine candidates vied in the first open race for mayor in 16 years. What made the 1983 election historically important was that it was the first repudiation of the business community since 1949. Finalists Ray Flynn and Mel King, the first African-American to reach the final in the city's history, were united in embracing the need to promote social and economic justice for all Boston's residents. More than 201,000 votes were cast in that final election for a new direction for Boston. Even with a growing population, turnout in Boston's last five mayoral elections hasn't even come close to that. From linkage to affordable housing, the agenda of the city shifted away from the downtown to the neighborhoods. The results: The period from 1984 to 1993 saw a transformation in race relations, reduced inequality, and expanded neighborhood empower-



ment. Boston saw real progress, while the growth in the downtown resulted in economic benefits redistributed to those most in need.

There is a breadth of capable candidates to succeed the 20-year mayoralty of Tom Menino. Let's hope that the next mayor will transform the city in a way that results in a shared prosperity for all Bostonians.

*Don Gillis
Boston*

Don Gillis served as executive director of the Economic Development Industrial Corporation of Boston under Mayor Ray Flynn.

EX-HOLYOKE MAYOR DISPUTES MORSE

Overall, the article in the Summer issue on Holyoke's new high performance computing center ("Booting up") was done very well, but I would suggest doing more background work on how the computer center came to be. Back in the mid-1990s, several of us city councilors, along with the Holyoke Gas and Electric Department, were advocating for the city to bid for the license for the Holyoke dam which the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) had put in process.

The city lost its bid to Northeast Utilities, which eventually ended up putting the dam license up for sale because of the onerous mitigations that FERC had attached to the license,

reducing its value. We continued our push for purchase and finally convinced the powers that be what a great deal this was for the city. This happened in the early 2000s. It was because of this purchase that the City of Holyoke was able to offer the reduced price for electricity to the universities for a high performance computing center. There were other factors involved, but this was the main one. This was our legacy to future generations just as our forefathers' purchase of the Tighe-Carmody Reservoir and Manhan Dam in the 1800s was.

One thing I must clarify, though, is Mayor Alex Morse's statement that because the previous administration

did not pursue a payment-in-lieu-of-taxes (PILOT) program when the permits were being pulled for the computer center project, the city had to accept a payment of only \$80,000. However, the previous administration, of which I was mayor, vigorously pursued a PILOT program with the computing center. However, the board of directors and the executive director of the center were not in place until January and February of 2012, during Morse's term. His administration would have had the final say on negotiating a payment-in-lieu-of-taxes with the universities.

Elaine Pluta
Former mayor and city councilor
Holyoke

THEY ARE REGULATED

The statement that Massachusetts doesn't license title insurers ("Title insurance: No regulation, few claims, huge profits," Summer '13) is incorrect. Title insurers are licensed pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws chapter 175. As Casey Stengel used to say, you could look it up.

Cornelius Chapman
Boston

CORRECTION

Due to a production error, author Herman Melville's last name was misspelled in state education commissioner Mitchell Chester's essay in the Summer issue on the debate over Common Core State Standards.

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A long way to go

OUR COVER STORY on minorities in the workplaces of Greater Boston started out small. Contributing writer Colman Herman proposed a story about the racial make-up of the Massachusetts Gaming Commission, the agency charged with bringing three casinos and a slots parlor to the state. Herman thought it was odd that a new agency starting from scratch had only four minorities (two blacks and two Hispanics) on its 29-person staff. One of the minorities was Commissioner Enrique Zuniga, who was appointed by state Treasurer Steven Grossman.

Perhaps the most intriguing aspect of the story proposal was that Stephen Crosby, the chairman of the gaming commission, is also one of the founders of the Commonwealth Compact, a nonprofit organization that seeks to promote greater diversity in Massachusetts. So if the commission was doing a poor job of hiring minorities, he certainly couldn't plead ignorance on the issue.

In an interview with Herman, Crosby indicated the minority hiring numbers were lower than he would have preferred. "When we started out, we had a lot of things that we needed to focus on to get things off the ground," he said. "But we can and should do better."

Despite Crosby's comment, I was still uncertain about the premise of the story, largely because I didn't know what an organization's minority hiring target should be. Looking around, I also realized there weren't many minorities at a lot of Boston businesses and organizations. MassINC, the publisher of *CommonWealth*, has 13 full-time employees, of whom two are minorities. The organization's 32-member board has four blacks and one Hispanic on it. Are we meeting our goals?

Many people in Boston believe the city has turned the corner on its racist past. Polling data suggest Boston residents overwhelmingly feel the city has come a long way on racial issues under Mayor Thomas Menino. His spokeswoman says the racial tension that once characterized Boston is gone.

Certainly race is not the divisive issue it once was. In

the campaign for mayor this year, race hasn't been a focal point. When no minority candidate made it into the final, no one cried racism. Instead, there was a lot of talk about the quality of Charlotte Golar Richie's message and whether a minority would have won if the minority community had coalesced around one candidate.

I recalled the *Boston Globe* won a Pulitzer Prize for a series of articles it ran in 1983 on the absence of blacks in Boston workplaces. I went back and re-read the series and began to wonder how far the city had come over the last 30 years. So Herman and I decided to find out. We updated some of the statistics the *Globe* reviewed 30 years ago and we talked to some of the same people the *Globe* quoted.

Boston has changed a lot over the last 30 years, but some things haven't changed at all.

But we also went off in new directions, in part because the city has changed quite a bit over the last 30 years. The *Globe* series focused exclusively on blacks, but we also looked at Hispanics and Asians because their numbers in Boston have been growing dramatically. The city's black population, by contrast, has hardly grown at all since 1983.

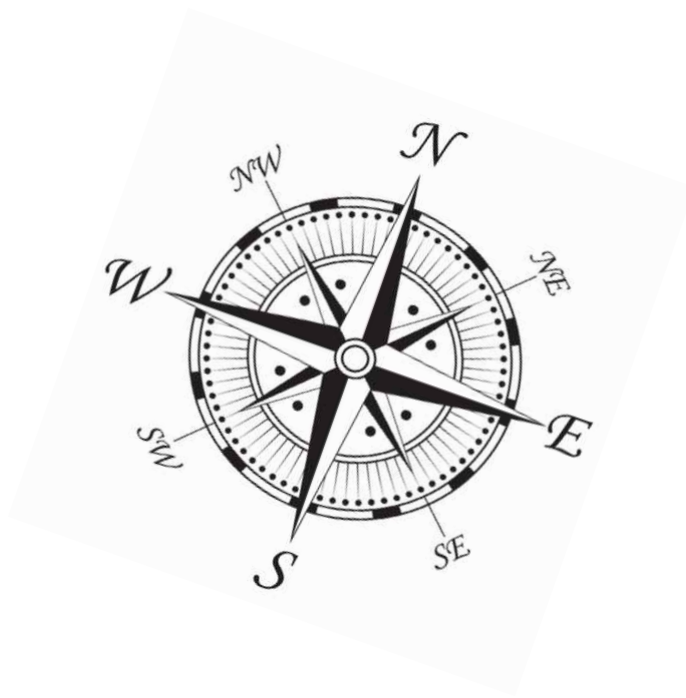
Our research led us to conclude that minorities are moving into Greater Boston's workforce in growing numbers, but not at the upper management level. Indeed, minorities seem to be underrepresented at the top of the corporate ladder and overrepresented at the bottom.

We heard a lot of explanations for why minorities aren't moving more quickly into the upper ranks of business—a more welcoming atmosphere in other cities, better opportunities elsewhere, or a lower cost of living in other areas. The more we talked to people the more we became convinced race was still a very serious problem in Boston, one that was not getting the attention it deserved.

We've come a long way, but we still have a long way to go. **CW**



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Buddy, can you spare a quarter — million?

The 1 percent lost a little footing last year in the state's workforce. According to records, the number of state employees earning more than \$250,000 a year dropped from 72 in 2012 to 62 this year.

Employees at the University of Massachusetts dominate the big-ticket earners, with all but four of the 62 members of the Quarter Million Dollar Club on the university system's payroll. In fact, Dr. Henry Niels, the state's Chief Medical Examiner, is the only non-education employee to break into the top earning category, with a salary of \$257,500. That ranks him 51st. The other three non-UMass top earners are presidents of other colleges. Overall, 51 of the top earners are men and 11 are women.

Among those at UMass with the quarter-million dollar salaries, nearly 70 percent are administrators, mostly presidents, executive vice presidents, provosts, chancellors, and deans. There are 11 professors earning more than \$250,000 and another four department chairmen. UMass's coaches for the men's Division 1 programs of basketball, football, and hockey all earn more than \$250,000, as does the UMass athletic director. The highest paid women's coach is the UMass women's basketball coach who earns \$213,000 a year.

For the third year in a row, Dr. Michael Collins, chancellor of UMass Worcester, topped the salary charts with earnings of \$592,850. Bonuses and incentives in each of the last two years bumped Collins's earnings over \$760,000.

► JACK SULLIVAN

What should a city charge for renting a sidewalk?

► COLMAN M. HERMAN

THE CITY OF Boston rents its sidewalks for outside dining to more than 50 restaurants using a fee structure that is getting poor reviews from budget watchdogs and economists.

The base fees the city charges restaurants for using sidewalk space haven't changed since the program's inception 13 years ago, even though a lot has changed since then in the local real estate market. The rate is based on city-wide building rents from 2000, with annual increases pegged to the Consumer Price Index.

The Cask 'n Flagon restaurant, for example, operates a 1,012-square-foot cafe on the city sidewalk next to Fenway Park at the corner of Lansdowne Street and Brookline Avenue. The restaurant launched its outside service in 2005, but started out paying the original 2000 base rate, which then rose in accord with the CPI in subsequent years.

Boston offers restaurants a substantial volume-based discount on their *al fresco* service, meaning restaurants that rent more sidewalk space pay a lower rate per square foot. The annual rate for 100 to 199 square feet, for example, is \$25 per square foot, while the rate for 900 to 999 square feet is \$11 a square foot.

DINING OUTSIDE IS FUN.

The rates also aren't adjusted for location. The South Street Diner, for example, receives no discount even though it's located on gritty Kneeland Street, where car traffic often exceeds foot traffic. By contrast, the swank Oak Long Bar + Kitchen at the Fairmont Copley Plaza Hotel pays no premium even though it is located in bustling Copley Square.

Samuel Tyler, president of the Boston Municipal Research Bureau, a business-backed group that monitors city finances, says he thinks the \$160,000 the city collects in yearly sidewalk rentals is less than it should be.

"I don't understand charging the same for square footage in all parts of the city, and I don't understand charging less per square foot for more square footage," he says. "There are some locations that are more lucrative and more attractive, and the city ought to capture that in their license fees."

Christopher Muller, a professor and former dean at Boston University's School of Hospitality Administration, says Boston's volume-discount approach "punishes" those restaurants with smaller outdoor spaces because they have to pay more for space that will yield less revenue.

Andres Branger, the owner of Orinoco Café, a Venezuelan restaurant on Shawmut Avenue, agrees. "Restaurants like mine with smaller outside spaces are not able to put out many tables. For us to then have to pay extra doesn't



make any sense,” she says.

Victor Matheson, an economist at The College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, says he thinks Boston’s every-side-walk-is-the-same approach isn’t a good deal for the city’s taxpayers and does a poor job of promoting economic development across the city. It discourages restaurants in less thriving areas to try outside dining, according to Matheson.

“Restaurants in areas where the indoor rents are high should pay more to the city for sidewalk space than those where the indoor rents are lower, and those rents, not the Consumer Price Index, should be used to make periodic adjustments,” he says. That would encourage restaurants in less thriving areas to try outside dining, he adds.

Matheson says Boston’s current approach is a bargain for established restaurants. “You get lots of restaurant expansion in places that need it the least and little expansion in the areas that could use the economic boost, such as Allston and Dorchester,” he says.

Another possible approach, Matheson says, would be to charge restaurants based on a percentage of their sidewalk sales, but he acknowledges it might be complicated for restaurants to separate their outdoor and indoor sales.

Dot Joyce, a spokeswoman for Mayor Thomas Menino, says there are no plans to adjust the city’s approach to sidewalk rentals, although she describes the practice of charging the 2000 base rate whenever a restaurant institutes sidewalk dining as an “oversight” that will be cor-

rected next year.

New York City takes a different approach to sidewalk rentals than Boston. It charges more overall for sidewalk space and more in the most desirable parts of Manhattan and less in not so desirable areas. New York also requires restaurants to pay the monthly sidewalk rental fee all year around; Boston charges just for the traditional outdoor-dining months.

In addition, New York tacks on a \$510 two-year license fee, a one-time \$310 charge to cover the cost of plan review, \$190 for those restaurants using portable heaters, and a security deposit of \$1,500. In Boston, no such fees are collected.

The Legal Sea Foods on State Street pays the city of Boston \$9,729 for 929-square-feet of sidewalk, but in a prime location in Manhattan that same space would go for closer to \$35,000.

BOSTON VERSUS NEW YORK.

Muller, the BU professor, says New York’s approach is a good model. He says diners love outdoor seating, it makes a city more lively, and restaurants enjoy the added revenue it brings in. But, he says, municipalities have to walk a fine line between promoting outside dining and making sure that taxpayers are not shortchanged.

“It’s a balancing act,” says Muller, a one-time restaurant manager himself. “It’s a policy decision and it’s an income decision for the city all in one.”

Meet the press – somewhere else

► JACK SULLIVAN

FOR DECADES, WHOEVER occupied the third-floor corner office at the State House would hop into the elevator outside his (or, in the case of Gov. Jane Swift, her) suite to go down to Room 157, the first-floor room designed for press conferences.

That, however, has changed dramatically under Gov. Deval Patrick, who seems to prefer to meet the press outside his office, where a scrum often occurs as print and electronic media jostle in a tight space for optimal positioning in order to hear and be heard. And, for the most part, the reporters are baffled as to why.

“He prefers the cattle call outside his office for reasons I just don’t understand,” says WBZ political reporter Jon Keller, who’s been covering governors back to the Dukakis administration. “Outside his office, it looks like they’re under siege. He’s not the tallest guy in the world, some-

times he looks dwarfed. The angles from cameras perched on the stairs above [the gathering], they’re particularly unflattering. One-fifty-seven is a more orderly procedure.”

SCRUM VERSUS SEATS.

Records from the governor’s office confirm his aversion to meeting the press in the traditional room. Since the beginning of 2009 through the end of September of this year, Patrick has used Room 157 a total of 22 times, an average of a little more than four times per year. The governor has used the room each year to unveil his budget, but after that it’s used sparingly. The high point was six times in 2009. He used it three times in 2011 and three so far this year.

No one is saying Patrick meets less often with the press. His aides point out he’s readily available on issues and announcements outside his office and around the state; he just doesn’t like to meet in a room designed for that very purpose.

Michael Norton, a reporter for State House News Service, has been in the building for the better part of 25 years. He says all of Patrick’s predecessors, including the notably press-averse Mitt Romney, regularly held court in Room 157. Norton says previous governors used the room at least once a month, usually more like once a week.

“There have been significantly fewer than his predecessors,” he says of Patrick’s press encounters in the room. “About a year ago, there seemed to be a burst of availabil-



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ities but it seems to have kind of flamed out.”

The room is set up with rows of chairs for the print media and a riser in back for television cameras, as well as plug-ins for audio and lighting. The stage can handle a Rockette-like line-up of speakers and, as Keller points out, he could take advantage of the podium in front of him by plastering the state’s website on it so it’s in every shot.

“No one cares about the comfort of the media, I understand that,” says Keller. “But the visuals, lighting, audio, it’s all better in 157. It’s not a big thing on the governor’s part, but it’s a dumb thing.”

A check on bad student loan debt

► JACK SULLIVAN

LAST YEAR, FEDERAL education officials did something they almost never do: They wrote off more than \$3 million in student loan debt belonging to nearly 500 students. Short of dying or paying them off, students almost never shed their college debt, even through bankruptcy. Yet the 500 students managed to convince the federal government that their loan providers had been duped into giving them the money illegally as part of a scheme by some colleges to take advantage of the federal government’s guaranteed loan program.

Federal officials say the students claimed their schools mischaracterized their qualifications or in some cases

forged their names on documents so the students would qualify for loans they weren’t entitled to. Attorneys who have represented some of the borrowers say they typically are non-English speaking students who are misled by their schools.

Government officials have made little attempt to recover money from those responsible for the bogus loans, in part because the loans represent such a small part of their \$90 billion-a-year lending program. “It’s the cost of doing business,” says one US Department of Education official who was authorized to talk about the issue but only without being identified. The official said many of the offending schools are for-profit institutions, such as beauty academies and technical institutes, that are now defunct.

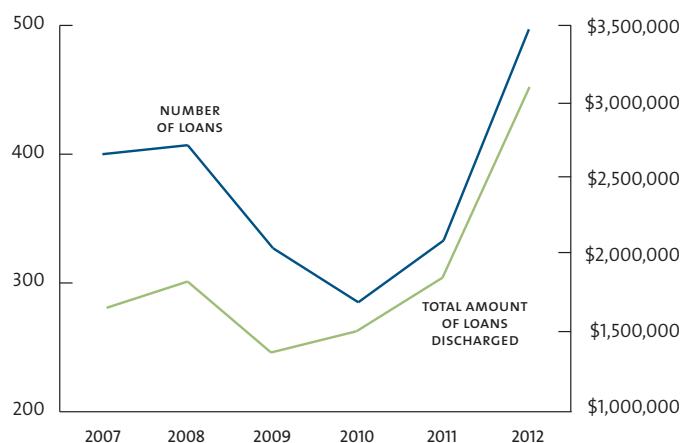
For students to qualify for federally guaranteed loans, their educational institution has to certify that they have obtained a high school diploma or general equivalency degree or passed a special exam that proves they are capable of learning at that institution’s level. In many of the cases in which the loans were discharged, the schools falsely certified students who did not meet the guidelines and then pocketed the tuition payments made with the loan money. In some cases, the schools apparently signed a student’s signature to the paperwork without the student’s knowledge.

Many of the students don’t discover what’s happened until years after they graduate. “We continue to see a stream of clients that come in who went to school almost 30 years ago that are still paying their debt,” says Robyn Smith, a California lawyer who works with the Massachusetts-based National Consumer Law Center. “Many are non-English speakers, students from other countries. [The schools] will have the students take a test online and they’re issued a fake high school diploma by taking a test.”

Federal officials were able to quantify the value of the loans they wrote due to faulty school certifications off (\$11.2 million over the last six years), but they were unable to provide any details on which loans were discharged or whether any of the colleges involved were located in Massachusetts. The officials said most of the records are in paper form and stored at regional offices.

Officials point out that the amount of loans written off is a tiny fraction of the \$1.3 trillion in total student debt, but they admit they don’t know how widespread the certification problem is because it is up to individual students to report it, not for officials to find it. “There aren’t a lot of these cases,”

STUDENT LOAN DISCHARGES DUE TO FALSE CERTIFICATION



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education

says the Department of Education official. “It’s the kind of thing we know about when we know about it.”

Federal officials can also discharge student debt if the student can prove it was procured through identity theft or some other illegal means. When the loans are dismissed, the Department of Education also dismisses accrued interest and penalties and is supposed to contact a credit agency to correct any problems on the borrower’s record.

One would think students would notice right away if they are being charged interest on a loan they didn’t want, but advocates say it’s often not that easy. They say students often take out loans worth thousands of dollars, so a small bogus loan slipped in as part of the overall package is often hard to spot.

It’s also difficult for a student to prove they’ve been wronged. For unauthorized signature challenges, the Department of Education requires at least four handwriting samples, including at least one from within a year of when the loan was originally issued. Because student debt never goes away, even in bankruptcy, the loan could go back decades, making finding anything with a signature from that long ago difficult.

“If you can’t provide that kind of evidence, even though the department hasn’t got contradictory evidence, you’re

forced to prove a negative,” says Smith, the California-based lawyer. It’s a “very difficult burden.”

Toby Merrill, an attorney at the Legal Services Center of Harvard Law School who deals with predatory lending issues for low-income people, says the majority of clients she deals with on bad student loans fall under the category of not qualifying for loans because of a lack of a high school diploma. But even then, she says, a student has to jump through hoops to show they were approved to enter their school without the proper credentials.

“Very few people have all their loan documents,” says Merrill. “The burden is not just high, it’s wrongly placed. The department is skeptical of such applications and requires volumes of documentation. Your say-so as a student is not enough.”

Merrill and Smith both say the DOE needs to come down harder on offending schools, not create insurmountable hurdles for students who were taken advantage of.

One example of those hurdles, says Merrill, is a Department of Education requirement that there be other claims filed against an accused school if someone seeking a loan discharge lacks a full complement of records. A classic Catch-22, she says. “When is the first student going to make the first claim?” she asks. “It’s an impossible bar.”



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State expanding school-to-work programs

► ADAM SENNOTT

AS A STUDENT at UMass Amherst, Darlene Arcese changed her major three times before realizing the traditional college experience wasn't for her. So Arcese went off the beaten education path and enrolled in the Power Utility Technology Program at Bunker Hill Community College, where she received the hands-on training she needed to start a career with NStar Electric, a subsidiary of Northeast Utilities.

For Arcese, the nine-year-old program was a perfect fit. She landed a good-paying job doing utility work in the field. "I love my job," Arcese says. "I never really wanted to work in a real office-type job."

Arcese is one of nearly 100 students who have completed the program, the crown jewel of the community college's workforce development programs and something of a model for the state Department of Higher Education as it pushes public colleges and universities across Massachusetts to develop programs that will train students for work in the four growth industries of health care, information technology, life sciences, and advanced manufacturing.

With the help of a \$20 million grant from the US Department of Labor, Massachusetts officials have been working for the last two years with the state's 15 community colleges, industry leaders, career centers, and local workforce investment boards to develop initiatives to help unemployed or underemployed students find jobs in expanding industries that need new workers. As with the NStar program, the goal is to match students with jobs, but the new effort is much broader in focus and is far more complicated because it involves multiple educational institutions and entire industries.

"Our goal is really to think strategically systemwide," says Christine Williams, associate director of workforce training for the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education. "We have 15 community colleges, nine state universities, and five UMass campuses. So across that entire system, where are the different areas that people are entering and exiting through that system and how do we make sure that they have both education and the training that they need that mirrors where their career is going to go?"

Dale Allen, vice president for community engagement

at Quinsigamond Community College in Worcester, says there are multiple pathways to jobs in the four targeted industries that may involve different types of degrees. "Workforce development isn't about a certificate, an associate's degree, and a bachelor's degree in isolation. It's about all of it," Allen says.

State officials have developed programs that help students find the jobs that are likely to be available to them and find out what they need to do academically to land them. In order to ensure Massachusetts's community college's achieve their goals, community college presidents, the commissioner of higher education, and the Department of Higher Education adopted a new funding formula driven predominantly by how the schools perform in steering students into the four targeted areas.

"It holds them accountable in a way that has never been practiced in higher education in Massachusetts," says Allen.

Some schools are already making progress. At Quinsigamond, Allen says, all of the school's biotech students do their capstone projects at Abbot Laboratories, and many of them are hired by large firms immediately after graduation.

"You will find that example at every community college, and every four-year institution," says Allen.

That type of approach has worked with the Bunker Hill utility program, which was founded in 2004 after NSTAR and the local utility union approached the community college for help replacing the company's aging workforce ("College try, CW, Spring 2007).

As part of the program, NStar guarantees every student a job interview upon completion of the program.

STUDENTS PROMISED INTERVIEWS.

More than 85 percent of graduates have been hired by NStar.

"We have pretty much hired everybody who has indicated an interest, or expressed an interest, in being employed with NSTAR," says Christine Carmody, senior vice president of human resources for Northeast Utilities. "But there have been a couple of people who have moved on to other parts of the country or roles within the utility industry with other companies."

The two-year program requires students to enroll in traditional college-level classes as well as fulfill paid internship requirements with NSTAR during vacations and holidays. The income generated through the internships is enough to cover the student's enrollment costs.

"I like to call it the super apprenticeship program," says Les Warren, executive director of Bunker Hill's Workforce Development Center. **CW**

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The Xs and Os guy

UMass is paying Charley Molnar \$267,000 a year to bring its football program to the nation's highest level. So far it's been an uphill climb.

BY JACK SULLIVAN | PHOTOGRAPH BY BRIAN MCDERMOTT

What prompted you to come here from Notre Dame and attempt to elevate UMass's football program? Well, like every assistant coach, I had dreams and goals to become a head coach at some point in my career, but, different than other coaches, I always envisioned myself as being a builder. This wasn't a startup. But a chance to take a program from the FCS [formerly Div. 1-AA] level to the FBS [formerly Div. 1-A] level was right up my alley, seemed like a challenge I was interested in. I could really roll up my sleeves, put my fingerprints on the program from its development into becoming a 1-A team.

You came from a program where the stadiums were sold out on a regular basis. Now the home games are at Gillette Stadium, 100 miles away from your Amherst campus. Is that a disconnect for the student body? It's like many parts of our program; it's a work in progress. We have enough of a constituency out in the eastern part of the state and it's our job to excite that group and to get them to want to buy tickets and come to the games. As far as our student population, we've made it easy for them to become active at our game day and, you know, not everyone has taken the opportunity but as our team grows and our success grows I think we'll find more and more students traveling down the Mass. Pike to Foxboro.

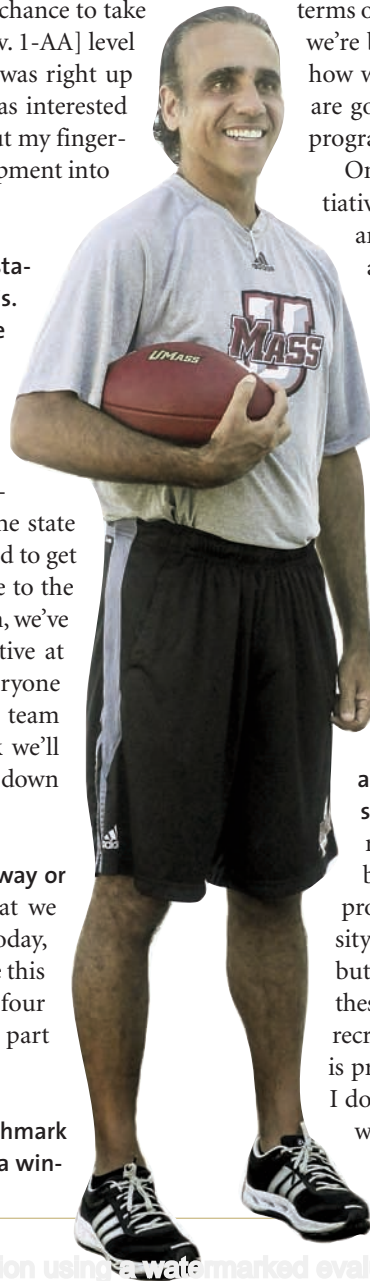
Does that affect your recruiting one way or another? Zero. I think everybody that we recruit understands where we are at today, but they can all see the vision of where this program is going to be in two, three, four years when they are actually here and part of the football program.

What would you consider to be a benchmark to show success in the program? Is it a win-

ning record? Is it defeating a nationally ranked team? Is it showing up and competing? Well, it depends on what week of the season you're asking me and what year it is, but right now I can tell you the improvement may be measured greater off the field than it is on the field in terms of wins and losses. The quality of the recruits we're bringing in, how we handle our academics, how we handle our social life, all of those things are going to be a measure of where this football program is going.

One thing I want to talk about, I have an initiative that I've named "Made in Massachusetts," and we've gone so far as to actually trademark a brand. We set a goal that in five years, UMass football will participate in a bowl game and 50 percent of our starters will be from the Commonwealth. That's a pretty lofty goal from the standpoint that the state of Massachusetts only turns out about 10 FBS-level players a year on average. So in Massachusetts—I don't care who else is recruiting them, it could be the elite programs in the country—we go after those guys hard, hard, hard until they say no and, even after they say no, we stay after them.

Are there more difficulties working within a system such as UMass that has accountability to taxpayers as opposed to a private school like Notre Dame? I think you have to really research your question a little better because I don't think this is a publicly funded program. There are subsidies from the university, like every athletic department in America, but this isn't like the taxpayers are paying all these scholarships and the entire equipment and recruiting budget and all that stuff. Much of that is privately given funds, so I want to be careful. I do feel responsibility to all the stakeholders at whatever school I've worked at, be it private or public. **CW**



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The GOP's corner office strategy

BY BRENT BENSON

WHILE MASSACHUSETTS RANKS as one of the bluest states in the nation, giving the average Democratic presidential nominee a 20-point advantage over his GOP rival in the last 14 elections, four of the Bay State's last five governors have been Republicans—an intriguing paradox.

With a wide-open race for governor looming in 2014, Republicans once again are hoping to take the State House corner office. They have tried to clear the field for Charlie Baker, the nominee in 2010, but victory is far from certain because the path is narrow for any Republican. Successful GOP nominees need to portray themselves as qualified fiscal managers, campaign as moderate-to-liberal on social issues, win support from Democratic voters, and find a way to deal with the gender gap.

Baker did not succeed in his first run for governor against incumbent Gov. Deval Patrick in 2010, but his initial moves in this campaign cycle show he is trying to right some of the wrongs of his last campaign. He is toning down his anger, shoring up his financial credentials by focusing on his rescue of Harvard Pilgrim and deflecting Big Dig financing concerns, and appealing to women by opening up about his private life.

The last eight gubernatorial elections have been split evenly, with four wins going to the Democratic nominee (two each for Michael Dukakis and Patrick), and four wins going to the Republican nominee (two for William Weld, and one each for Paul Cellucci and Mitt Romney). Table 1 shows the two-party vote percentage for the Democratic and Republican nominees for Massachusetts governor from 1982 through 2010, ignoring third-party candidates.

All of the Democratic wins, with the exception of Patrick's most recent 2010 victory, were blow-outs, with margins of more than 20 points. All of the Republican wins, with the exception of Weld's historic 1994 thrashing of Mark Roosevelt, were relatively close, with margins of 5 points or less.

In order to win in Massachusetts, a Republican gubernatorial candidate needs to build a coalition of Republicans, independents (unenrolled voters not

formally aligned with either party), and Democrats.

The current party breakdown in Massachusetts has 36 percent of the electorate registered as Democrat, 11 percent registered as Republican, and 53 percent registered as unenrolled.

While these percentages suggest that a Republican could win an election with only Republican and independent votes, that's unlikely since many unenrolled voters are independent in name only. An examination of public Massachusetts voter participation records indicates a significant portion of unenrolled voters only pull Democratic primary ballots, and a significant portion of unenrolled voters only pull Republican primary ballots, a strong indicator of partisanship.

Pre-election and exit polling of recent statewide races show GOP candidates have not garnered more than 68 percent of the independent vote statewide, the level Scott Brown achieved in his January 2010 special election win for the US Senate. A Republican that wins 60 percent of the independent vote (very good by historical standards) and 95 percent of the Republican vote (also good), still loses when winning 20 percent of the Democratic vote.

Election Day exit polls show Republican Kerry Healey had only single-digit Democratic support in her loss to Patrick in 2006, and Baker's lack of appeal with Democratic voters in 2010 was one of his key problems in finding a path to victory in that election. Table 2 provides polling data on Baker's strength with Democrats during the 2010 election.

Some of Baker's poor showing with Democrats in 2010 can be attributed to Patrick's longstanding popularity with progressives—Patrick maintained over 75 percent favorability ratings with Democrats in the 2010 cycle, a wave year for Republicans who picked up large numbers of seats throughout the country and affected morale, enthusiasm, and financing in Massachusetts races.

Baker was seen as angry and edgy in his campaign against Patrick. He tried to counter that perception head-on in his recent campaign kickoff video for the 2014 race, using words such as “husband,” “father,” “community,” “positive,” and, most

importantly, “bipartisan.” Baker’s success will likely depend on his ability to stay on this positive message during the heat of a campaign.

It is difficult to judge how the presence of third-party candidates affects Republican chances in Bay State gubernatorial elections. While conventional wisdom holds that the presence of Treasurer Tim Cahill in the 2010 race hurt Baker because of their similar positions on the issues, the polling evidence, including who Cahill supporters named as their second choice, is equivocal.

Over the last eight elections, there is no correlation between the number of candidates in the general election and success for either party (see Table 3). In fact, the average number of candidates in elections with Democratic winners and Republican winners is the same, at 3.25, and the two head-to-head races between only a Democrat and a Republican were split with a Democrat (Dukakis) taking one and a Republican (Weld) the other. There is not enough data to draw conclusions about the effect of a candidate being unenrolled or from a particular third-party like Green-Rainbow except to say that there does not seem to have been a large third-party effect in the last eight gubernatorial elections.

A common thread for each of the successful GOP gubernatorial candidates over the past 30 years has been a concerted strategy to campaign as a capable manager who would be fiscally prudent with taxpayer dollars, combined with liberal positions on social issues, particularly abortion rights.

Some activists in the Massachusetts Republican Party complain that their candidates lose elections because they are RINOs (Republicans In Name Only), arguing that a candidate positioned as a “Democratic-Lite” alternative can’t win elections. Evidence, however, shows that successful statewide GOP candidates in Massachusetts have been



decidedly moderate and close to mainstream Democrats on social issues but more conservative on fiscal matters.

Bill Weld and Paul Cellucci fit this moderate mold to a T, and Mitt Romney ran in a way that placed him in this same moderate category in 2002 (although he changed his strategy and positions when trying to win the Republican nomination for president in 2012). A GOP centrist strategy also allows the Republican candidate to label the Democratic rival as a liberal extremist. Weld, Cellucci, and Romney all effectively used this approach.

Baker fits the socially moderate mold, as he is in favor of abortion rights and gay marriage. He also attempted to use the sound-fiscal-manager argument in 2010, based on his time as CEO of Harvard Pilgrim. However, while serving as the Massachusetts secretary of administration and finance, Baker was the primary architect of a Big Dig financing scheme that has been blamed by some as responsible for causing a \$1 billion per year underfunding of the Commonwealth’s transportation system.

Baker’s role in Big Dig financing received media coverage in his 2010 run, and even surfaced in Republican blogs as a reason to support his then-Republican rival Christy Mihos. It will be interesting to see whether recent tax hikes to pay for transportation needs become an issue in next year’s race. Democrats have blamed Baker for the transportation-funding deficit that necessitated the new levies, but Baker may well run against the tax increases that Democrats enacted.

Republican candidates generally receive more support from male voters, while Democratic candidates receive more support from female voters. If approximately the same

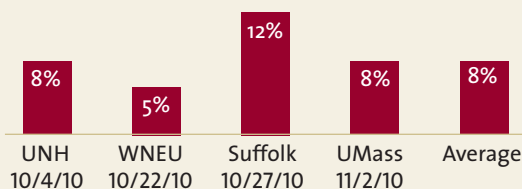
Table 1
TWO-PARTY GUBERNATORIAL RESULTS 1982-2010

Year	Democrat		Republican		Margin
1982	Michael Dukakis	62%	John Sears	38%	D+24
1986	Michael Dukakis	69%	George Kariotis	31%	D+38
1990	John Silber	48%	William Weld	52%	D-4
1994	Mark Roosevelt	29%	William Weld	71%	D-42
1998	Scott Harshbarger	48%	Paul Cellucci	52%	D-4
2002	Shannon O’Brien	47%	Mitt Romney	53%	D-6
2006	Deval Patrick	61%	Kerry Healey	39%	D+22
2010	Deval Patrick	54%	Charlie Baker	46%	D+8
Average					D+4

SOURCE: Massachusetts Secretary of State

Table 2

BAKER'S SHARE OF DEMOCRATIC VOTE 2010



number of males and females vote, a winning candidate needs to make up a deficit of votes from one gender with a surplus of votes from the other.

Republicans who win statewide in Massachusetts typically follow one of two strategies: They either try to stay close to their Democratic rival in attracting women and win with strong male support, or they write off the female vote and try to win with sky-high male support.

Romney in his 2002 win over Democrat Shannon O'Brien was able to keep things relatively close with women. An average of exit polls from the race had Romney at -6.5 with women and +12 with men—adding these together we get an approximate gender balance margin of +5.5. This positive gender balance margin means that Romney made up his -6.5 point deficit with women by building up a larger margin of +12 with men.

Brown, in his victory over Democrat Martha Coakley in the January 2010 special election, was able to combine sky-high support from men with a relatively small deficit among women. A post-election *Washington Post* survey showed Brown at -3 with women, but up a whopping +14 with men—adding them together yields an approximate +11 gender balance margin.

Baker was able to win a slightly higher percentage of men than Patrick in the 2010 gubernatorial election with a +2 margin with men, but Patrick trounced Baker with women. The GOP nominee was behind with women by 25 points, giving Baker a negative gender balance margin of -23 points.

Baker is working to address the gender gap for the 2014 election by putting his family front and center in his campaign. "I care about being a good husband to my wife Lauren, and a loving and responsible father to our three children," Baker says in one of the first sentences of his September kickoff video, against the background of photos of him and his family.

Baker could also achieve crossover appeal in the zero-sum game of politics by being blessed with an unappealing opponent. Weld received a priceless gift in 1990 with the nomination of Boston University president John Silber as his Democratic opponent. Silber was arguably more



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conservative than Weld on some issues and seemed to go out of his way to anger Massachusetts Democrats and the party establishment, being quoted as saying that mainstream Democrats would sell-out America.

The 1990 Weld-Silber race was also framed by sitting Democratic Gov. Dukakis’s historically low approval rating. Voters were angry with Dukakis for a slumping economy and a difficult budget situation, which had led to Dukakis’s veto of a \$210 million local aid package. Even with these advantages, Weld won the race by only a 3 point margin.

The Massachusetts GOP will likely try to make the 2014 race a recap of 1990, running against gas and (since repealed) software taxes enacted by the lame duck governor and the Democratic Legislature. How big a role the tax hikes will play in next year’s gubernatorial election will depend on the timing and success of any repeal effort and whether Baker can successfully frame the debate around the idea that voters need a Republican on Beacon Hill to act as a check on the Democrats. Baker can easily make this anti-Beacon Hill argument in the abstract, but he may have difficulty campaigning against

Table 3
NUMBER OF CANDIDATES IN MA GOV. ELECTIONS

Year	Number of Candidates	Third Party Vote %	Winner	Party
1982	4	4.0%	Michael Dukakis	Democratic
1986	2	-	Michael Dukakis	Democratic
1990	3	2.7%	William Weld	Republican
1994	2	-	William Weld	Republican
1998	3	1.7%	Paul Cellucci	Republican
2002	5	5.3%	Mitt Romney	Republican
2006	4	8.9%	Deval Patrick	Democratic
2010	3	9.4%	Deval Patrick	Democratic

SOURCE: Massachusetts Secretary of State

a centrist legislative leadership that is increasingly drawing heat from the progressive left for not raising taxes enough to pay for needed education, transportation, and infrastructure. **CW**

Brent Benson analyzes politics and public policy in Massachusetts using a quantitative approach on the Mass. Numbers blog (massnumbers.blogspot.com). You can follow him on Twitter @bwbensonjr.

Amazing things happen
when people work together.

Boston's transportation 'war room'

Traffic cams, lights, and parking spots: the high-tech side of dealing with traffic congestion **BY ALYSSA MARTINO**

WHEN IT COMES to Boston's notoriously tangled matrix of streets, which are a challenge for local drivers and a nightmare for visitors brave enough to try navigating them, a seventh-floor command center in City Hall is where a team of engineers does its best to make order out of chaos.

The center utilizes a complex system of video cameras that can zoom, tilt, and pan in on the city's busiest intersections, allowing staff to play Big Brother monitoring cars and pedestrians on the roads. Sixty-four percent of Boston's traffic signals are under the city's direct control, meaning that staff have the power to manually change signal times to make traffic flow more smoothly in the wake of accidents, construction, bad weather, or excessive congestion.

"This is our war room," says Thomas Tinlin, the commissioner of Boston's Transportation Department, ushering visitors into a seventh-floor command center at City Hall filled with dozens of video screens monitoring traffic across the city. "Twice a day, we go to war."

Cities across the nation are making synchronization a high priority as part of a broader effort to reduce traffic congestion and the vehicle idling that contributes to pollution and global warming. Some of the efforts are fairly straightforward: promoting alternate forms of transportation, such as mass transit and bicycling; redirecting traffic to less congested roads; and trying to convince pedestrians and drivers to coexist peacefully. But many municipalities are also working on high-tech solutions to congestion, using road sensors, cameras, computers, and even specially designed apps to keep traffic moving as fast as possible.

Boston faces a particularly daunting challenge in keeping congestion at bay. Between 600,000 and 700,000 vehicles pass through or drive into the city each weekday, bringing in people that more than double Boston's population. The city was recently ranked No. 10 in the country for worst traffic by INRIX, a traffic information and services group, behind cities such as Los Angeles, San Francisco,

and New York.

Managing Boston's traffic is particularly difficult because it is a city with roadways that tend to meander rather than follow the type of rectangular street grids common in New York or Chicago. Boston's intersections are also challenging. John DeBenedictis, the engineering director for Boston's Transportation Department, used to work for Florida's transportation department. He says a typical Florida road might have one traffic light over a quarter-mile stretch, whereas Boston often has three lights. "It's just more difficult to coordinate signals more closely spaced together," he says.

Boston's drivers are notorious for being aggressive behind the wheel, but Tinlin says the city's pedestrians are also aggressive and often move about the city in ways that contribute to traffic congestion. "You see some crazy stuff," Tinlin says, referring to pedestrians he has seen on the city's traffic cameras who step onto busy roadways, eyes glued to their smart phones, causing traffic to snarl.

DeBenedictis says safety is the city's top priority, which explains why it's not uncommon for city officials to have all lights at an intersection turn red simultaneously so pedestrians can cross safely. He says turning all lights red at once slows traffic down but is necessary to avoid pedestrian accidents.

Boston's traffic signals became a minor issue in the city's mayoral race this summer. At a forum at The Palm restaurant in July, the candidates were asked about their transportation priorities. City Councilor Mike Ross began ticking off ideas for late-night MBTA service, new taxi regulation, and more emphasis on bicycle and pedestrian traffic. "We also need to have a smart-grid system for traffic," he said. "Even on the way over here, in 2013, I watched as every light along the surface artery was completely ill-timed."

Ross later said his experience on the Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway that morning was not unique, suggesting that the city isn't using technology effectively to time or synchronize its traffic

lights. "I think we can do a lot better," he says.

But Tinlin says the city is already using traffic technology effectively. He says Ross that morning in July was probably just a casualty of the city's war on traffic congestion. "There are times when volume can just overburden your network," Tinlin says. "During rush hour, synchronization can only get you so far."

Boston's traffic lights have been timed to some extent since the 1980s, but Tinlin says the agency has taken a more proactive approach to traffic management in the past several years. In 2007, staff members using engineering studies began retiming traffic lights every five years on a rolling basis to account for changing traffic flows. Traffic patterns are constantly evolving as new office buildings and apartments pop up. The Seaport District is a case in point. As new buildings open there and tenants move in, the traffic changes and the timing of the lights needs to be adjusted.

Retiming a light costs about \$5,000, and adjustments are typically based on the distance between lights, turning patterns at the intersection, and counts of vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists using the intersection.

Nearly 550 of the city's traffic lights can also be adjusted on a day-to-day basis from the command center in City

Hall. Engineers make calls about which lights to adjust by studying video feeds from 506 traffic and intersection cameras and tracking vehicle traffic using a system of magnets placed underneath roads.

Tinlin says he is constantly amazed how an accident or ongoing construction at one location can affect traffic patterns miles away. Construction work on the Longfellow Bridge linking Boston and Cambridge, for example, required an extra 23 cameras to monitor detours and affected traffic patterns as far away as Massachusetts Avenue, Tinlin says. He also says spillover congestion from the Massachusetts Turnpike, Interstate 93, as well as the tunnels and bridges leading into the city can lead to back-ups in the city. Tinlin says his staff must constantly assess the city's traffic system as a whole, and never focus on one intersection or series of intersections.

The system seems to be working. Internal reports covering the period from 2007 to 2012 indicate the city's traffic management system has cut traffic delays by 29 percent, auto emissions by 12 percent, fuel consumption by 12 percent, and crashes by 8 percent. By assigning a dollar value to commuter time and the other variables, city officials estimate every dollar they invest in retiming lights yields a \$47 return.

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Boston's traffic flow is monitored inside a command center on the seventh floor of City Hall, where officials can adjust traffic signal times to ease congestion.

The 301 traffic lights not controlled remotely by city officials likely won't be added anytime soon. "I'd love to have all of them linked up," DeBenedictis says. However, he adds, it's probably not worth the cost, since the signals are located in more remote neighborhoods where traffic isn't as problematic. "It just becomes a time and money

issue," DeBenedictis says.

Tinlin says his department isn't just relying on traffic signal management to speed up traffic. He says his agency tries to reduce cars on the road by making it convenient for people to take mass transit, share cars, and ride their bikes. Technology also plays a role, from message boards set

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up outside Russia Wharf telling those exiting the parking garage the best route to the Southeast Expressway to apps that warn users about heavy traffic ahead so they can find alternate routes.

Tinlin also says his agency is hiring an outside vendor to develop a smart phone app that will allow users to quickly navigate to an empty parking space. The app relies on sensors being installed at each parking space that will indicate when the space is free, and allow the user to use GPS to find the space. Tinlin says the payoff could be big: 30 percent of non-peak traffic in Boston consists of drivers circling on city streets scouting for parking spaces.

Los Angeles has already taken its traffic management to a whole new level, putting all of its 4,500 lights under central control. A spokeswoman for the Los Angeles Department of Transportation says synchronizing the city's lights, a project that cost more than \$400 million, has brought travel time down 12 percent and travel speed up 16 percent since 1997. DeBenedictis says what Los Angeles is doing is very similar to what Boston already does, except on a much larger scale.

But the new Los Angeles traffic management system, implemented last spring, is different for one other reason: it links vehicle detectors to computers that can automat-

ically update signal timing to manage congestion—without any human assistance. DeBenedictis isn't quite convinced, saying he values having staff gauge problems and make the changes on their own to avoid automatic changes that could throw the entire system out of synch. "Based on our experience, we believe that it is more efficient to have engineers evaluate the data and make these timing adjustments than having everything automated," he says.

But there's no denying that traffic technology is changing rapidly. "What LA is doing is a sign of the future," says Phil Caruso, deputy executive director for technical programs at the Institute for Traffic Engineers in Washington, DC. He says Los Angeles is experimenting with traffic signals that update on their own but adds that it also won't be long before the streets are full of vehicles that drive on their own.

"A lot of vehicles have technology that tells if someone is behind you, or if there's a vehicle on your left, right, or in your blind spot," Caruso says. "Twenty years from now, you will be able to sit in a car and it's going to be driving itself."

Cars that effectively operate on autopilot? That might mean the end of the hot-tempered "Boston driver," and could therefore be the best traffic management innovation of all. **CW**



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What Markey needs to do

Analysts say the senator needs to focus on potholes and getting better

known BY SHAWN ZELLER

IT SEEMS LIKE yesterday—in fact it was in June—when longtime US Rep. Ed Markey of Malden won his race to succeed John Kerry in the Senate. Markey's win only entitled him to fill out the remainder of Kerry's term, which ends in January 2015. And so Massachusetts' new junior senator has just a year in office in a gridlocked Washington to reenergize tapped-out donors and to show voters he deserves a full six-year term.

Republicans are watching him closely, and many of them think the party has a better chance of taking the seat in 2014 than it did in 2013 when newcomer Gabriel Gomez lost to Markey by 10 percentage points. A victory would probably hinge on whether the party can recruit a marquee candidate such as former senator Scott Brown. Markey's standing could also suffer if he stumbles politically or if voters grow even more frustrated with Washington.

Markey says his top priority is to end sequestration, the across-the-board budget cuts Congress enacted in 2011 that began taking effect this year and are slated to cut deeper into federal agency budgets in January. "Sequestration is cutting at the heart of our business plan in Massachusetts," he says. "The cuts in research at hospitals, universities, and our high-tech and defense labs are eliminating jobs and strangling growth."

But Markey is not the type of Democrat anyone expects to break the stalemate in Washington. Since the late 1980s, he's sided with his party on more than 95 percent of House votes that split a majority of Democrats from a majority of Republicans. Like most other Democrats in Washington, Markey would like to reduce the pain of federal agencies by raising taxes on the wealthy, an approach Republicans reject. Markey says he's

"tired of gridlock" but won't compromise his principles.

The impasse between the Republicans who control the House and the Democrats who run the Senate will also prevent Markey from pushing any of the liberal ideas that marked his more than 36 years in the House, such as legislation to forestall climate change. So he'll need to focus his attention on things he can do, like fending off accusations that he doesn't know his state well, and lobbying federal agencies to direct funding to Massachusetts.

Brad Bannon, a pollster for Democrats and liberal groups, says that if Markey is to win reelection next year, he's going to have to reinvent himself, if not as a forger of compromise then as a specialist in constituent service. "Ed Markey has always focused on and been identified with high-profile national issues," Bannon says. "As a senator, Markey will have to change his style and become Senator Pothole," someone willing to pressure government agencies on behalf of angry constituents over the smallest of issues.

Markey says he's ready to seek federal funding where he can. Infrastructure spending, traditionally supported by both parties, could be the ticket. And Markey believes the issue can be framed to appeal to his environmental supporters as well. "I want to put union steelworkers and ironworkers and welders and electricians to work building the new backbone for a new energy economy," he says.

Before Brown decided not to run in the special election this year, he joked that Markey didn't even live in Massachusetts, needling Markey for having claimed his parents' home as his Massachusetts address, a house Markey now owns. He also criticized Markey for maintaining a higher profile among Democratic Party activists in Washington,

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where he's a hero for his work to combat global warming, than among his own constituents.

Markey will need to inoculate himself from such assaults. "One of the rubs against Markey had always been that he wasn't well known in Massachusetts outside his district," says Tony Cignoli, a Democratic consultant in Springfield. "In my neck of the woods, Worcester and out west, he could really put some work in. Showing up out here would be a big deal."

Markey is taking that advice. Before Congress reconvened in September, he toured Western Massachusetts and met with local mayors and business leaders. He also visited two sites that have received federal funding in the past, a former industrial area in Chicopee that the government is helping to redevelop, and the John Olver Transit Center in Greenfield, headquarters for the regional bus system. It's an example of the kind of new energy project Markey likes, since it's powered by renewable energy sources.

In the Senate, Markey has assumed Kerry's old committee assignments, Small Business and Entrepreneurship; Commerce, Science and Transportation; and Foreign Relations. On the Foreign Relations Committee, he chairs the International Development subcommittee. Markey says he plans to continue to focus on environmental issues, pursue tougher gun control rules, protect abortion rights, and seek to upgrade transportation infrastructure.

But nothing is likely to happen in Congress on Markey's priority issues before the next election. House Republicans deny the science undergirding global warming and say the regulation of power plants pursued by the Obama administration is hurting the economy. Congress earlier this year rejected new gun control measures proposed after the elementary school shootings in Newtown, Connecticut, and it's almost certain the issue will not be revisited. The important fights on abortion rights are occurring in the states and the fate of state bills will be resolved in court, not Congress. Last year, Congress enacted a new transportation funding law that sets the federal government's fiscal obligation to the states through 2014. The issue won't come up again until 2015.

Winning over Bay State voters who aren't affiliated with either party is increasingly the key to statewide election. Brown took a majority of these unaffiliated voters against Attorney General Martha Coakley in the special 2010 election to fill Ted Kennedy's seat. Markey won them handily in June against Gomez. "There are more independents than Democrats. He's got to make sure he's doing something for them," says Cignoli.

There is another way for Markey to make a mark with them: By bringing home some federal funds. Whether Markey can win passage of a major bill "doesn't matter to the average person struggling with an orthodontist bill or

mortgage,” says Cignoli. “He needs to show he can use 30-plus years of friendships to bring money back to Massachusetts, not just a grant for an arts center, but infrastructure projects in the towns and cities that are in need of it.”

But even that is harder than it once was, since Congress placed a moratorium on earmarks, the line items in appropriations bills with which lawmakers used to fund hometown projects.

Politically, Markey is aligning himself with Elizabeth Warren, who won back Kennedy’s seat from Brown in 2012 and is riding a wave of popularity for her populist attacks on big banks. The two are making regular joint appearances. Warren’s campaign organization is top notch and she helped Markey during his run for Kerry’s seat. Markey also wants Massachusetts voters to believe that he and Warren can be as effective a team as their predecessors. “Ted Kennedy and John Kerry partnered with each other for a generation and the people of Massachusetts benefited from their leadership,” he says. According to Markey, he and Warren will continue that “tradition of national leadership.”

Markey also needs to avoid any big gaffes or ethical missteps. A scandal or even a poorly worded statement could make a Republican candidate competitive. It didn’t help Markey’s cause earlier this year when the *Boston Globe* reported that Markey had made a call to University of Massachusetts President Robert Caret in order to help a former aide win a lobbying contract.

Generally, Democratic incumbents in Congress do well in Massachusetts. Not one has lost a congressional race since 1992, when Republican Peter Torkildsen defeated Democrat Nicholas Mavroules and Peter Blute beat Joseph Early. Both Mavroules and Early were already wounded by corruption scandals.

Since then, even extremely popular Republicans have had little success. Consider William Weld, the GOP governor who stormed to reelection in 1994 with 71 percent of the vote, then lost two years later in his bid to unseat Kerry in the Senate. In that campaign, Kerry linked Weld with the unpopular Republican House speaker at the time, Newt Gingrich, and Kerry won reelection by a comfortable eight percentage points. Brown would be vulnerable to the same kind of attack.

Already, a MassINC poll released in July shows that Brown has slipped in a hypothetical matchup with Markey. In three polls taken before Brown declined to run in the special election to fill Kerry’s seat this year (and before the Markey campaign got rolling), Brown led Markey in each and by as much as 22 points in MassINC’s January survey. Now Markey is up by five points over Brown.

“The biggest thing Ed Markey needs to do he’s already done,” says Democratic consultant Scott Ferson. “He’s been elected to the Senate from Massachusetts.” **CW**

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No seat at the table

Despite talk of ‘valuing diversity,’ as well as the encouraging ways that Boston has opened up, the region’s power structure still largely excludes blacks and Hispanics

BY BRUCE MOHL AND COLMAN M. HERMAN | ILLUSTRATION BY ANTHONY FREDA

Boston has come a long way

since the days of school busing in the 1970s. The city is far more racially diverse, with blacks, Hispanics, Asians, and other minority groups now accounting for more than half of the city’s population, up from less than a third in 1980. Signs of that diversity are growing. We have a black governor in the State House. Half of the 12 candidates for mayor in the recent Boston preliminary election were people of color. South Boston, the epicenter of the anti-busing movement, is represented by a black state senator

of Haitian descent who is scheduled to host the city's St. Patrick's Day breakfast roast next year.

James Rooney, who heads the Massachusetts Convention Center Authority, says he believes Boston's racist image is starting to fade, with black convention groups slowly returning to Boston for their meetings. What these groups find, says Rooney, who grew up in South Boston, is a city no longer cordoned off by color.

"You can walk up and down Broadway and Castle Island and you'll see a wide range of people of different races," he says of two South Boston landmarks. "You didn't see that 25 to 30 years ago. It was a more racist city then. A lot of those barriers have been broken down."

J. Keith Motley, a 6 foot, 8 inch black man, says he steered clear of Southie when he came to Boston in 1973 to attend Northeastern University. But now he says he drives through South Boston and by Carson Beach nearly every day on his way to work as the chancellor of UMass Boston in Dorchester. He says he even has "aunties" in Southie, people who have adopted him as one of their own.

"I never dreamed in 1973 that I would be sitting over here on this oceanfront by one of the beaches that was

used as a symbol of division back in the day," Motley says, sitting at a table in the UMass student center. "Our students make it feel like South Beach in Miami now when you go over there because it's so culturally diverse. It's a changed place in that regard. You know, I'm sort of a symbol of some of that change by having the role that I have."

Yet for all the highly visible progress on race in Boston, there is still a long way to go. In that regard, the symbolism of the mayor's race is unmistakable: A campaign that started with many candidates for color is ending with two white, Irish-American men running against each other. Blacks and Hispanics represent two-fifths of the city's population, but they are largely absent from Greater Boston's power structure, which continues to be dominated by whites. Employment information filed with the federal government by area employers indicates blacks and Hispanics tend to be underrepresented at the highest levels of business and overrepresented on the lower rungs of the corporate ladder. Minorities are underrepresented in law firms, on college faculties, in unions, and city newsrooms.

The picture that emerges is similar to what the *Boston Globe* reported in a series of Pulitzer Prize-winning articles

DIVERSITY LACKING AT BOSTON LAW FIRMS | By Colman M. Herman

Nutter McClennen & Fish, one of the largest law firms in Boston, is proud to point to the fact it was founded way back in 1879 by renowned Supreme Court justice Louis Brandeis. In an interview, managing partner Deborah Manus is quick to quote Brandeis: "In differentiation, not in uniformity, lies the path of progress."

But the Nutter rhetoric clearly doesn't reflect what's happening on the ground at its Boston office. Of the firm's 74 partners and 46 associates, there is not a single black or Hispanic to be found, according to data provided by the firm. Only one partner is a minority—an attorney who reports being in the "two or more races" category. There are two Asians, both of whom are associates.

"Honestly, we're not where we want to be," Manus says. "But it's not for a lack of trying. We have been focused on these

issues a long time." That indeed is a common sentiment expressed by other law firms in Boston.

Diane Patrick, a partner at the largest law firm in Boston, Ropes & Gray, sums up the general state of diversity at the big law firms in Boston. "Among the major law firms in the city, it is not incredibly diverse in terms of attorneys of color," says Patrick, wife of the governor.

This is particularly true, Patrick adds, for black and Hispanic lawyers. Patrick points to her own law firm, where she is one of two black partners and there are also two Hispanic partners out of a total of 135, according to data she provided. "I think we're getting better, but we have a long way to go here in Boston," she says.

Meanwhile, Patrick's firm proudly announced in September that it is the recipient of the Thomas L. Sager Award, which

"demonstrates...the highest sustained commitment to improving the hiring, retention, and promotion of women and diverse lawyers."

Robert Harnais, vice president of the Massachusetts Association of Hispanic Attorneys and a solo practitioner in Quincy, questions the efficacy of what the law firms are doing to achieve diversity. "There are many firms trying their best, but something is clearly not working," he says. "They need to take a step back and look at the real numbers here—they're not good by any means."

Choate Hall & Stewart provided data revealing that it has only one black, one Asian, and one Hispanic among its 87 partners. Margaret Marshall, the head of the firm's diversity committee and former chief justice of the state's Supreme Judicial Court, declined a request for an interview



Gov. Deval Patrick tries to diversify state government, while Diane Patrick promotes diversity at her law firm, Ropes & Gray.

BREAKDOWN OF MINORITY PARTNERS AT TOP BOSTON LAW FIRMS

to discuss the numbers.

But Wendell Taylor, a black partner at WilmerHale, is not reluctant to speak out. His firm declined to provide detailed data, but *CommonWealth* assembled as best it could a racial breakdown of the firm by examining the photo gallery on WilmerHale's website. Taylor confirmed the general accuracy of the data.

"They're terrible," he says of the numbers. Referring to all the major Boston firms, Taylor says: "We're trying to play catch up and we're trying to combat some preconceived notions about the city, about the community, and whether or not Boston is a place where a person of color can start a career and be happy living here."

Taylor indicates there are no quick fixes. "Let's be candid," he says. "I think it's going to be a long time before the legal community reflects our general community."

FIRM	WHITE	BLACK	HISPANIC	ASIAN	OTHER	TOTAL
Ropes & Gray	126	2	2	5	0	135
Goodwin Procter	160	1	1	2	0	164
WilmerHale*	—	—	—	—	—	105
Mintz Levin*	—	—	—	—	—	138
Bingham McCutchen	91	0	1	0	0	92
Edwards Wildman	71	0	1	2	1	75
Foley Hoag*	—	—	—	—	—	91
Choate Hall	84	1	1	1	0	87
Goulston & Storrs	88	0	1	0	0	89
Nutter McClennen & Fish	73	0	0	0	1	74
Total	693	4	7	10	2	
Total (%)	97	0.6	0.9	1.4	0.3	

SOURCE: Data provided by the law firms. Among those with asterisks, WilmerHale declined to provide detailed diversity data, while Mintz Levin and Foley Hoag refused requests for data. The photo galleries of partners on the websites of those three firms suggest their minority numbers are in line with those of the firms that provided data.



Recurring theme? A Fall 2003 cover story in *CommonWealth* asked why Boston has so little black political power.

in 1983 documenting the lack of blacks in Greater Boston's workplaces. The series began by pointing to the all-white makeup of The Vault, the city's most powerful business group at the time; the deans of Harvard University; the group of leaders representing the Boston construction trades, and the *Globe's* own team of senior editors.

Little has changed over the last 30 years. The group of union leaders, until recently headed by Boston mayoral candidate Marty Walsh, is still all white. The *Globe's* team of senior editors now has one Hispanic. The Vault is gone, replaced by the Massachusetts Competitive Partnership, which is made up of 16 of the state's most powerful CEOs — 15 of them white, one Asian. Harvard today has 15 deans instead of the 10 it had in 1983; all but two are white. Those two deans are both Asian.

Rep. Byron Rushing, a black lawmaker from Boston, says the racial climate has changed for the better in Boston since he was first elected 30 years ago, but some things have not changed. The number of black residents has held steady, while the Hispanic and Asian populations more than tripled. The percentage of the city's population that is white has fallen from 68 percent in 1980 to 47 percent today, but Rushing says the heavily white power structure has barely changed at all over that time period.

"All you need to tell this story is to send a photographer to take pictures at meetings," Rushing says, referring to the city's boardrooms. "It's all white."

Rushing exaggerates, but only slightly. The 26-member board of the Massachusetts High Technology Council is all white. MassBio, which represents biotech, has 24 board members who are white, three who are Asian, and one Hispanic. The board of the Greater Boston Chamber

of Commerce has 108 members, of whom five are black, one is Asian, and the rest are white. Associated Industries of Massachusetts, another major business group, has 100 board members: three are black, one is Asian, and the remainder are white.

The boards of the city's major hospitals don't reflect the communities they serve. Partners Healthcare, the corporate parent of Massachusetts General Hospital and Brigham and Women's Hospital, has one minority on its otherwise all-white 17-member board. Beth Israel Deaconess has 20 whites, one Asian, and one black on its board. The Children's Hospital board has 18 whites, two blacks and one Hispanic.

Diversity on the boards of publicly traded companies in Massachusetts lags well behind the Fortune 500. Research conducted by the Alliance for Board Diversity indicates minorities fill 13 percent of the board positions at Fortune 500 companies. By contrast, minorities represent less than 6 percent of the board positions at the 100 largest publicly traded companies in Massachusetts. Of the 845 directors at the 100 companies, there are 16 blacks (2 percent), four Hispanics (0.5 percent), and 26 Asians (3 percent).

Carol Fulp, president and CEO of The Partnership, a Boston-based nonprofit that's been working for 25 years to

Diversity on the boards of publicly traded companies in Massachusetts lags well behind diversity on the Fortune 500.

create greater diversity at the top of the corporate ladder, is not discouraged. She says diversifying boards is a challenge across the country and adds that the Great Recession a few years ago had a tremendous impact on the ability to move more minorities up the corporate ladder. "Boston certainly has its challenges, we all know that, but we are making progress," she says.

LITTLE COLOR IN TOP RANKS

Minorities tend to be underrepresented in the management ranks of Greater Boston businesses and overrepresented in the lower-skilled positions. The trend holds true for law firms, colleges and universities, and most industries.

The best information on the racial makeup of businesses comes from the US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, which collects data from employers with more than 100 workers and any federal government contractor with at least 50 employees. The information in the Boston area is aggregated for the Greater Boston commuting region, which includes five counties in eastern Massachusetts and two in southern New Hampshire.

The data for 2012 indicate that blacks represent 9 percent of the overall workforce, which is roughly equal to their share of the region's working-age population. Similarly, Hispanics represent 8 percent of the workforce, about the same as their share of the region's working-age population. Both percentages are up significantly from 30 years ago, when blacks represented 5 percent of the workforce and Hispanics 2 percent.

But those numbers mask the fact that blacks and Hispanics tend to be concentrated in lower-skilled jobs. At the top of the region's corporate ladder, a category of jobs identified as officials and managers, blacks hold 3 percent of the positions. At the bottom of the ladder, the service worker category, they hold 24 percent of the jobs. The numbers for Hispanics are similar.

A benchmark commonly used by federal officials to assess minority hiring confirms the imbalance. The measure, developed by the US Census, uses information gathered from worker surveys to provide an indication of the availability of workers of various races in each of the Equal

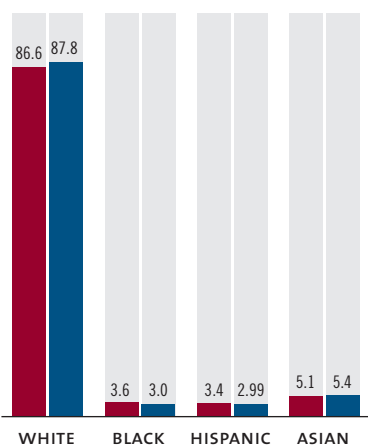


Employment Opportunity Commission's job categories. The benchmarks for the Greater Boston area indicate blacks are slightly underrepresented among top corporate officials and managers (they account for 3.6 percent of the available workforce but 3 percent of the actual workforce) and heavily overrepresented among service workers (they represent 12 percent of the available workforce but 24 percent of the actual workforce).

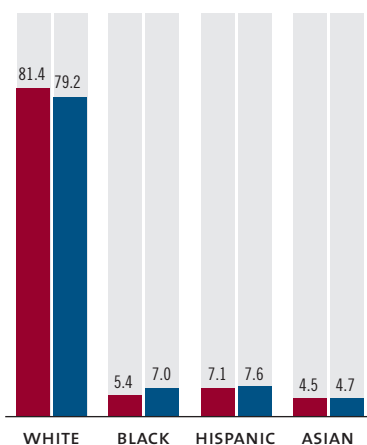
In many specific industries, blacks and Hispanics represent a tiny portion of officials and managers. In life sci-

HOW GREATER BOSTON PRIVATE SECTOR HIRING COMPARES TO BENCHMARKS (PERCENT OF TOTAL)

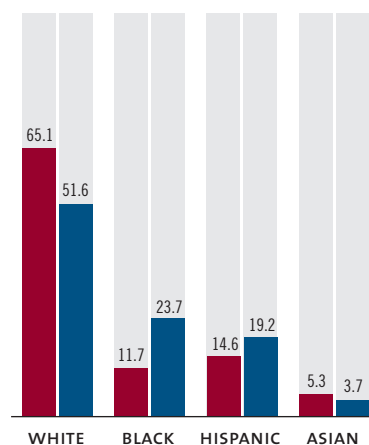
OFFICIALS AND MANAGERS



SALES WORKERS



SERVICE WORKERS



SOURCE: Benchmark data comes from the US Census EEO tabulation 2006-2010. Actual hiring comes from 2012 Equal Employment Opportunity Commission data. Greater Boston consists of five eastern Massachusetts counties and two southern New Hampshire counties.

■ BENCHMARK
■ ACTUAL

Marsha Chery of Roslindale chats with J. Keith Motley, chancellor of UMass Boston, where minority faculty hiring exceeds the area average.



ences, for example, blacks account for 272, or 2 percent, of the 14,600 officials and managers in the Greater Boston area, while Hispanics account for 2.4 percent. In high tech, 501, or 1 percent, of the more than 32,000 officials and managers are black, while 4 percent are Hispanic.

At Greater Boston's hospitals, 5 percent of the 10,400 officials and managers are black and 3 percent are Hispanic. Nationally, the percentages are 7 percent black and 5 percent Hispanic. Similar patterns hold true at insurance carriers, financial services companies, and securities firms.

At seven of Boston's largest law firms, 97 percent of the partners and 84 percent of the associates are white. Blacks and Hispanics each represent less than 1 percent of the partners and 3 and 2.6 percent of the associates, respectively.

Wendell Taylor, a black partner at Wilmer - Hale, says associates represent the pipeline of legal talent for law firms. He says that law firms have attracted a bigger pool of minority candidates over the last 15 years, but so far that bigger pool hasn't translated into minority gains at the partner level. "The kids that stay at the firms long enough to be considered for partner are typically gone in years four and five," he says.

The *Globe* reported in 1983 that the percentage of black full-time faculty members at 30 colleges and universities in Greater Boston was half the national level: 2 percent in

Boston compared to 4 percent nationally. Thirty years later the numbers haven't changed much. Blacks represent 3 percent of the full-time faculty, half the national average of 6 percent. Hispanics account for 3 percent of full-time faculty versus the 4 percent national average.

Schools such as Harvard, MIT, Boston University, and Bentley University had a lower percentage of black faculty

Schools such as Harvard, MIT, BU, and Bentley had a lower percentage of black faculty than the area average.

than the area average, while Wheelock, Emerson, and UMass Boston, all institutions headed by blacks, had percentages that were much higher.

Officials at the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission shared their data on employment patterns in Greater Boston, but did not make any assessment of the information. Thomas Saltonstall, who headed the Boston office of the EEOC 30 years ago when the *Globe* wrote its

series, was not so hesitant.

In a statement, Saltonstall said the data from 30 years ago were appalling. He said the latest data for 2012 gathered by *CommonWealth* suggest the problems from the 1980s have not disappeared. “These continuing patterns of job segregation are deleterious to our economy and damaging to Greater Boston’s people, communities, and reputation,” his statement says. “It is long past time for us to move off the dime with respect to discriminatory employment practices. The world has changed. Let’s move forward. We are far better than this.”

THE POLITICS OF RACE

Back in July, Boston mayoral candidate Marty Walsh was asked by a middle-aged black woman at a Jamaica Plain forum how he would address racism in Boston. Walsh seemed caught off guard by the question, responding that it was the first time the issue had come up during the campaign, but adding quickly that he would not tolerate racism in his administration.

In September, just before the preliminary election he would go on to win, Walsh sat down with *CommonWealth* and offered a very different answer. He says he has come to realize during his travels around the city that race remains a very important issue in Boston.

“You see the challenges that people face,” he says. “You

see some shortfalls in hiring and lack of opportunity for folks.” It also hit him at the fundraisers he held with the business community; he would look around the room and realize the people there didn’t reflect the racial make-up of Boston.

Walsh’s rival in the race for mayor, John Connolly, says race remains a major issue in Boston because there are such wide gaps between whites and people of color on virtually every economic, health, and education indicator. Talking as he left a campaign event at City Hall Plaza in early October, Connolly said the power structure in Boston is still ruled by whites. “We have a lot of barriers to entry for people of color on all fronts,” he says. “While we’ve come a long way, we still have a long way to go.”

Mayor Thomas Menino declined to comment, but his spokeswoman, Dot Joyce, says the mayor would be the first to say that more needs to be done to address racial issues in Boston. But she said the city has made a lot of progress. “There isn’t the racial tension that was there before,” she says. As for the power structure in the city, she suggested the atmosphere is changing. “It’s not black and white anymore,” she says. “This is more of a global city now.”

In some ways, it’s hard to understand why it took Walsh a campaign for mayor to realize the challenge of diversity in Boston. When he took over as head of the Boston Building Trades Council in 2011, the problem was staring

FACULTY MINORITY BREAKDOWN AT SELECT GREATER BOSTON COLLEGES (FALL 2011)

COLLEGE	FULL-TIME FACULTY	WHITE	BLACK	HISPANIC	ASIAN
Babson	171	138	8	0	16
Boston College	950	753	31	17	87
Boston University	3,214	2,233	70	90	337
Emerson	185	137	16	11	11
Endicott	93	60	0	1	4
Harvard	4,001	2,283	98	131	546
MIT	5,157	3,101	65	126	436
Northeastern	1,103	849	50	38	103
Simmons	219	173	19	11	14
Suffolk	389	317	17	9	40
Tufts	850	629	25	33	96
UMass Boston	547	388	32	21	64
Wellesley	316	240	16	15	39
Wheelock	66	47	11	5	2

SOURCE: National Center for Educational Statistics.

THE NUMBERS FOR THE STATE, BOSTON SHOW IMPROVEMENT

By Colman M. Herman and Bruce Mohl

The minority hiring records of the state of Massachusetts and the city of Boston are both relatively good, a sharp contrast to most companies in the private sector.

State records for fiscal 2012 indicate that nearly a quarter of the 44,445 executive branch employees are minorities, three times the percentage in 1983 when the *Globe* ran its series on racial hiring. The minority share of 24.6 percent under Gov. Deval Patrick is less than two points higher than it was in 2006, former Gov. Mitt Romney's last year in office.

Patrick administration officials say the overall minority numbers didn't increase dramatically from Romney to Patrick, but big changes did occur in the ranks of top managers, where the minority percentage has risen from 11 percent to 16 percent.

Sandra Borders, director of the state Office of Diversity and Equal Opportunity, says the increase in managers was a priority of the governor. "If you're sending a message that we're a welcoming and open environment and we really want you to come work for us, people will take you up on that," she says. "Is that the message that corporate America sends most days? I don't think so, having worked there."

Of the city of Boston's nearly 20,000 municipal workers, 48 percent are minorities, with 30 percent black, 13 percent Hispanic, and 5 percent Asian. The *Globe* reported in 1983 that the city's workforce was 18 percent black.

The city numbers overall for minorities are strong, but salary data covering a large chunk of city workers indicate there is a big pay disparity between whites and minorities, suggesting whites tend to have higher-paying jobs. The data indicate the average earnings of whites is \$60,822, compared to \$37,257 for blacks, \$35,729 for Hispanics, and \$33,532 for Asians. Men, on average, earn \$55,367, compared to \$38,038 for women. (The salary data cover roughly half of the municipal workforce and exclude school workers and officials at the Boston Redevelopment Authority.)

Mayor Thomas Menino's spokeswoman, Dot Joyce, said the pay disparity may be explained partly by generally higher salaries paid to police and fire employees, who tend to be mostly white.

There is also a disconnect between the minority composition of students in the Boston schools and the teachers who teach them. According to state records, the minority makeup of the city's school children is nearly 36 percent black, 40 percent Hispanic, 13 percent white, and 9 percent Asian. By contrast, city records indicate their teachers are 63 percent white, 21 percent black, 10 percent Hispanic, and 5 percent Asian.

Two state agencies, Energy and Environmental Affairs and Public Safety and Security, lag in minority hiring relative to the rest of state government. The employees of the two agencies are 11 percent and 13 percent minority,

continued on page 42

him in the face. The 19 union leaders sitting around the table at council meetings were all white, and the leadership of their individual unions was roughly 90 percent white. Rank and file members were predominantly white as well, although exact numbers are unavailable.

"There's an issue with lack of opportunity to get into the trades," Walsh says. "Part of that was due to the fact that we had a down economy. But you can't run away from the fact that five years before we had a down economy it was still difficult to get into the trades."

Walsh says he recognized the problem and moved to address it by launching a program called Building Pathways, which was designed to usher women and people of color into the city's trade unions. Participants need a high school or general equivalency degree to qualify, but if they are selected they are given training and a pathway into the unions. The program has graduated 54 people so far, 90 percent of them minorities.

If he is elected mayor in November, Walsh says he plans to appoint a chief diversity officer for the city, a cabinet-level person whose job would be to recruit minorities as teachers and police officers and also press private sector employers to boost their minority hiring.

"It's not just an issue in construction. It's an issue in other industries," he says. "The issue has to be addressed, and that's part of running for mayor of Boston, to really promote and try to advocate for employment opportunities for communities of color. In 30 years, Boston has come a long way, but I don't think we're where we should be."

Asked why the city has been slow to change, he says: "Some of it's race. Some of it's education. Some of it goes back to poverty. All of these challenges go back to two things—poverty and lack of education."

James Jennings, a professor of urban and environmental policy and planning at Tufts University, says the available statistical data suggest Boston is plagued with "structural inequality that is racialized." Minorities lag behind whites in education attainment and grapple with unemployment rates that are twice as high. The median income of white households in Boston is \$65,502, nearly double that of blacks (\$36,654) and Hispanics (\$30,562).

Jennings says the racial disparities don't receive as much attention as they should in Boston. He also doesn't think that the inequality can be explained away by simply blaming it on poverty and lack of education, since history has many examples of poor, white ethnic groups battling their way to equality in Boston.

"I don't think that's an adequate answer," he says of Walsh's view. "I think the answer is who has wealth and who doesn't, and how they hold on to it."

Boston mayoral candidate John Connolly says Boston still has a long way to go on minority issues.



Rival Marty Walsh says he would appoint a chief diversity officer for Boston.



DIVERSITY DOESN'T JUST HAPPEN

Ruben King-Shaw Jr. is the managing partner and chief investment officer at Mansa Capital, a Boston private equity firm that specializes in the health care area. King-Shaw is black and Hispanic, with dual citizenship in the United States and Panama. After a career inside and outside of government at the state and federal level, he came to Boston about 10 years ago because the area was on the

cutting edge in health care. He admits he came to Boston excited professionally but apprehensive personally.

"Boston for a long time had a fairly negative perception. It goes back to busing," he says. "If you didn't live here, if you're not from here, you don't think of it as a place that's open and welcoming to people of color, particularly African-Americans." But he says he's been pleasantly surprised by Boston and its residents. He says the city doesn't



CiVICsense

MassINC's Civic Sense network is an events and programming series aimed at cultivating a community of civically-engaged young people in the Bay State. Civic Sense is an initiative of the MassINC Associate Board: A group of young professionals in the business, government, and nonprofit sectors who advise and promote the work of MassINC.

respectively. Officials say minority hiring in the energy agency lags other state agencies because many of the employees are in science and engineering fields, where women and minorities tend to have a low presence.

James Rooney, the head of the Massachusetts Convention Center Authority, says it's often hard to fill government jobs with minorities because the highly qualified candidates can usually land bigger paychecks elsewhere. He recently had an opening for a job paying about \$150,000 a year. He says he reached out to three people of color for minority referrals and they all came back with white candidates. He says the job ended up going to a white person, largely because a highly qualified minority candidate could command a much bigger salary elsewhere.

Ronald Marlow, the state's assistant secretary of access and opportunity, a position created by Patrick, says the governor has tried to lead by example on the hiring front. For example, Patrick has made 159 judicial appointments since taking office in 2007, with 28, or 18 percent of them, going to minorities. He also nominated Roderick Ireland as the state's first black Supreme Judicial Court chief justice.

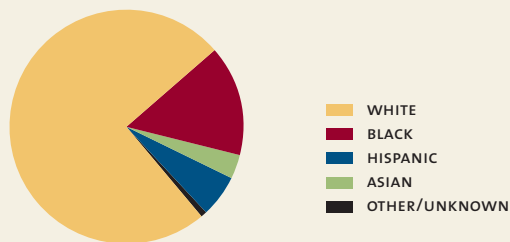
Patrick has also dramatically increased the number of minorities in his own office. The office staff of about 50 employees was 5.1 percent minority under Romney and grew to 28 percent minority under Patrick. The percentage of black employees grew from 3 percent under Romney to 15 percent under Patrick.

"He sets the tone," says Marlow of the governor.

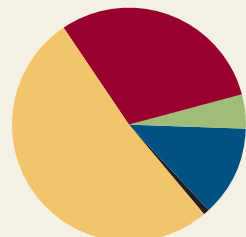
Jack Sullivan contributed to this report.

MINORITY BREAKDOWN FOR STATE, CITY

STATE 44,445 EMPLOYEES



BOSTON 19,992 EMPLOYEES



SOURCE: State of Massachusetts, city of Boston

exhibit what he calls "southern hospitality," but it has been more welcoming than he thought it would be. "I didn't find meanness here," he says.

One thing he has noticed in Boston is the lack of diversity on boards and in corporate management, nothing like what he witnessed in Miami, Atlanta, Chicago, and Washington, DC. He says the private and public sector in each of those cities pursues programs to bring women and minorities into the power structure. "I don't think diversity at the higher levels happens by itself," he says.

Similar initiatives are underway in Boston, but the lack of progress over the years raises questions about their effectiveness. King-Shaw, for example, read about an ini-

Public and private groups are pushing initiatives to hire, promote, and retain minorities.

tiative by the Massachusetts pension board to steer investment money to smaller firms, particularly those headed by women and minorities. He says similar programs have worked well in other states, but he hasn't heard much about the Massachusetts program since it was first launched in 2011. "It makes you wonder about the commitment," he says.

Steven Grossman, the state treasurer who chairs the state pension board, acknowledges a nearly two-year delay in implementing the so-called emerging manager program, but he says the delay doesn't reflect any backing away from his commitment to level the playing field for women and minorities. He says staff turnover caused the delay, but now that the right people are in place, the board voted in August to steer an initial \$100 million of pension fund assets to a company that will select smaller firms to manage the money. Over time, the pension board plans to shift 5 to 10 percent of the fund's \$55 billion in assets to smaller money managers. The board is also leveraging its stock portfolio to promote corporate diversity by voting against the election of any company slate of directors that includes no women or minorities. "A diverse board produces better decision-making," Grossman says. "We have zero tolerance for zero diversity."

Fulp, of The Partnership, is approaching the problem

of diversity from a slightly different angle. Her primary focus is an initiative that takes minorities referred by participating companies and runs them through a leadership training program. The minorities learn the skills they need to move up the corporate ladder, and the companies fill out their executive ranks with more minorities. “We try to position diversity as a business imperative as opposed to a social imperative,” Fulp says.

The Partnership’s first class 25 years ago had 31 individuals, including Diane Patrick, the governor’s wife who is now a partner at Boston’s largest law firm, Ropes & Gray. The most recent class had 250 members. There are almost 3,000 alumni.

Fulp is also working with the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce and the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston on the Internship Collaborative, an effort to steer internships to minorities at local universities so they develop business relationships that will make them more likely to stay in Boston after graduation. “You go where your relationships are,” Fulp says.

She also is about to launch an effort to steer more high school students into math and science, using The Partnership’s alumni network to mentor them. The goal is to build a pipeline of minority students preparing for the innovation economy. “That’s where the future is,” she says.

Gov. Deval Patrick is also trying to increase diversity in life sciences and tech fields. “Look,” he says at a conference at the MIT Media Lab in Cambridge in July, “the life sciences sector [in Greater Boston] is the most important

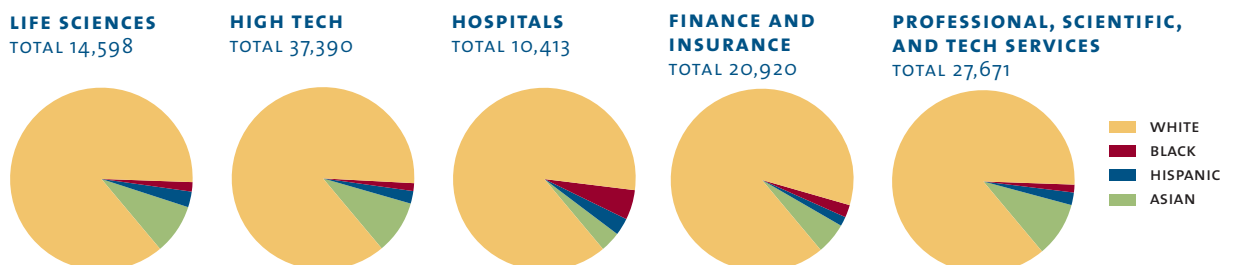


“Pretty much everywhere I go I will be one of the very few women in the room and the only African-American,” says Susan Windham-Bannister, who heads the state’s Life Sciences Center.

life sciences super cluster on the planet.” He points to Dr. Susan Windham-Bannister, a black woman sitting in the front row of the audience who heads the state’s Life Sciences Center. The governor says Windham-Bannister has all the skills needed to do her job, but he says that’s not the only reason she was hired. “It’s also important to me that she looks the way she does.”

In an interview, Windham-Bannister says she spends a

TOP OF THE CORPORATE LADDER: MINORITY BREAKDOWN OF OFFICIALS AND MANAGERS



SOURCE: 2012 data from the US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission for Greater Boston, which consists of five eastern Massachusetts counties and two southern New Hampshire counties.

ASIANS DO BETTER THAN THEIR NUMBERS WOULD SUGGEST

By Bruce Mohl and Colman M. Herman

One minority group that seems to be moving assertively into Greater Boston's power structure is Asians. They are making stronger inroads in the workplace than blacks and Hispanics, who outnumber them significantly.

Census data indicate Asians represent 9 percent of Boston's population, compared to 18 percent for Hispanics and 22 percent for blacks. Despite their smaller numbers, 5 percent of top corporate officials across the Greater Boston region are Asian compared to 3 percent each for blacks and Hispanics, according to federal data.

In high tech, life sciences, financial services, and other industries, Asians outnumber blacks and Hispanics on boards of directors and at the top of the corporate

ladder, sometimes by wide margins.

At area colleges, Asians represent 10 percent of the full-time faculty, compared to 3 percent each for blacks and Hispanics. At Harvard, the ratio is similar: 14 percent Asian compared to 3 percent Hispanic and 2 percent black.

In the *Boston Globe's* newsroom, Asians represent 10 percent of the newsroom staff, compared to 12 percent for blacks and 5 percent for Hispanics. Among newsroom supervisors, there are seven Asians compared to four blacks and two Hispanics, according to information provided by the *Globe*.

At seven of the largest law firms in Boston, there are 10 Asian partners, compared to four black partners and seven Hispanic

partners. At the associate level, there are 62 Asians, 23 blacks, and 20 Hispanics.

"When you talk about diversity at law firms, Asians make up the largest percentage of minorities," says Wendell Taylor, a black partner at WilmerHale. "At the same time, blacks and Hispanics are significantly lagging behind."

One area where Asians have not pulled ahead of blacks and Hispanics in employment is state and city government. In both places, Asians represent a much smaller percentage of the workforce than the other two groups.

The US Census defines an Asian as a person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent.

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lot of time with life science companies trying to help them arrange funding and build their workforce. She knows from first-hand experience that the workforce is not diverse. "I like to say it's a story of few and fewer," she says.

Minorities and women in general lack exposure to math and science and are rarely encouraged to go into tech fields.

"Pretty much everywhere I go I will be one of the very few women in the room and the only African-American." She says corporate executives need to understand that diversity is good business. "This goes well beyond a social issue," she says. "This is about the fact that the demographic pro-

file of our workforce is changing."

She says the biggest problem is that minorities and women in general lack exposure to math and science and are rarely encouraged to go into tech fields. While the Life

Sciences Center is best known for its efforts to bolster the finances of life science companies and build academic research facilities, Windham-Bannister also devotes a lot of her time and some of the center's money to programs that encourage women and minorities to get involved in science. The Life Science Center donates money for lab equipment to vocational technical schools and to schools in the state's Gateway Cities, which have high minority student populations. It runs an internship program and it even donates to the Museum of Science and the Children's Museum.

"We're trying to open this up in as many ways as we can," she says. "We can help build a pipeline, but we have to look at ourselves collectively to make Boston and Massachusetts be more welcoming places. This is still a challenge that we're dealing with." **CW**

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¡Arriba Lantigua!

William Lantigua has become a pariah in statewide political circles, but he's hailed by many in Lawrence, where the Teflon mayor is fighting for four more years.

BY GABRIELLE GURLEY | PHOTOGRAPHS BY MEGHAN MOORE

"Who are you?"

Lawrence Mayor William Lantigua is not happy to see a reporter in his downtown campaign headquarters, much less one who has dropped in unannounced and is busy snapping his picture. The Essex Street storefront, bustling with volunteers on a Friday afternoon before the preliminary election, quiets down. The mayor stops stacking envelopes into a plastic tray. His face displays no emotion, but his commanding baritone says it all. He is annoyed. Very annoyed. Brushing aside the reporter's question about his campaign, Lantigua returns to the mailing. "Take all the photos you want," he says. "But I won't comment."



Problems don't seem to stick to Lawrence's mayor, William Lantigua.



"Tell me the mayor of a city that has not made mistakes," says Isabel Meléndez, the mayor's campaign manager.



Any Massachusetts politician up for reelection with half of Lantigua's troubles probably would not want talk to a reporter, either. Where to start? The dustup over failing to resign his State House seat immediately after becoming mayor in 2010? Two recall attempts? The indictments of his former chief of staff, his current deputy police chief, a police officer, and a city parking garage attendant who worked as his photographer? Lantigua's own appearance before a grand jury? State income tax liens? Allegations of campaign finance irregularities?

These problems would have crippled a lesser politician. But this is Lawrence, and Lantigua's problems are viewed differently here. Where the rest of Massachusetts sees a never-ending spectacle of scandals and questionable decisions, Lantigua's Immigrant City supporters see a campaign of innuendo and falsehoods orchestrated by a news media determined to end the political career of the first elected Latino mayor in Massachusetts.

The preliminary mayoral contest on September 17 was not about the city's future. It was a referendum on a controversial mayor. No one in Lawrence thought Lantigua would lose, and he did not disappoint, finishing first and pulling in nearly 50 percent of the vote in a six-man race.

In public, Lantigua oozes confidence. His nonchalance about his very real troubles has alienated many Lawrencians and most of the Bay State political establishment. However, that defiance has made him a hero in a city that is roughly 75 percent Latino. "Because of all the scandals that have been in the media, people outside Lawrence have a different sense of what is happening here," says José Alfonso

García, a close political ally of Lantigua who works for the city's schools. "Inside the city of Lawrence, it's totally different. The image that Mayor Lantigua has, the support that he has, is incredible."

Lantigua, who came to the United States from the Dominican Republic in 1974, has been on the Bay State's political radar for a little more than a decade. But for more than 20 years, the mayor has been a community hero to many Latinos, especially Dominicans, Lawrence's largest Latino ethnic group. He greets his Facebook friends and Twitter followers with "*¡Hola, familia!*" ("Hello, family!"). He has been known to take money out of his own pocket to help a person or their relatives through a tough patch. The charismatic 58-year-old is a regular fixture in barber-shops and city stores. Lawrence residents even get birthday cards from him.

"He is the person who looks after us and cares for us like family," says Lantigua supporter Milagros Williams in Spanish.

CHANNELING CURLEY

City Council vice president Dan Rivera, Lantigua's opponent in the final election, says each individual incident fits into a broader pattern. "This is James Michael Curley," he says. "I don't know why people are shocked; this is not new to American politics."

Indeed, to understand Lantigua's hold on Lawrence, think of him as a modern-day heir to the colorful and controversial four-term mayor of Boston. Curley, a proud



José Alfonso García, who works for the city's schools, says the mayor's support is incredible.



Mayor Lantigua comforts a supporter who recently lost her mother.

Irish-American son of the city, attained folk-hero status in the early 1900s by breaking through the Brahmin stranglehold on political power in the capital city. Like Curley, Lantigua brings a distinctive blend of populism, bluster, and political acumen.

Lantigua is also a symbol to Dominicans and other Latinos in Lawrence the way Curley was to the Irish in Boston. "Curley made his government interesting by acting out the impulses of his core constituency," writes Jack

Lantigua is a symbol to Dominicans and other Latinos in Lawrence the way Curley was to the Irish in Boston.

Beatty, author of *The Rascal King: The Life and Times of James Michael Curley (1874-1958)*, a biography of the mayor. "Similarly, he knew that his constituents wanted to voice their clotted resentment against Boston's Protestant elite...so he did it for them."

The parallels don't end there. Curley tried to hold on to a congressional seat he'd been elected to while also serving as mayor. Lantigua tried a similar tack when he was elected mayor in 2009, announcing he wouldn't relinquish

his state representative seat in the Legislature. He only stepped down after his fellow lawmakers threatened to reject a \$35 million state bailout for his struggling city.

During his community activist days, Lantigua became the voice of Latino resentment in Lawrence. At City Council meetings, Lantigua irked councilors by holding up a piece of paper with his telephone number on it, urging people to call him personally if they had problems with government offices. Those actions helped foster a sense of trust among Latinos that Lantigua would look out for their interests, says Isabel Melendez, another veteran community activist and Lantigua's campaign manager. He brought his activist's drive into City Hall. For years, Spanish speakers had to bring along an English-speaking family member or friend to help them take care of any business at City Hall. Now, Melendez says, there is someone who speaks Spanish in every department in the building.

"He's a fighter," Melendez says of Lantigua. "There was no one who had the guts like Willy."

Lantigua's personal touch with voters plays well among Lawrence's heavily Dominican population. According to Ramona Hernández, director of the Dominican Studies Institute of the City University of New York, there is a tradition of clientelism in Dominican Republic politics that some immigrants brought with them to the US: Voters go to the polls expecting that their candidate, if successful, will resolve their individual problems. "Voters, they want results," says Hernández.

Lantigua gears his political outreach almost exclusively to his Latino constituents. When he wants to weigh in on a subject, Lantigua relies on trusted local Spanish-language media and bypasses *The Eagle-Tribune*, called the “the Evil Tribune” by some local wags. The regional newspaper has alienated Lantigua and his supporters with its relentless coverage of the mayor’s predicaments. Meanwhile, Boston-based English and Spanish-language newspaper and television reporters who are likely to challenge the mayor

County grand jury indicted Bonilla on multiple charges related to an alleged exchange of more than a dozen municipal cars for several others of lesser value owned by a car-dealer friend of Lantigua. On the night of his preliminary victory celebration, Lantigua appeared with Bonilla, who continues to receive his salary while he prepares for a criminal trial next year.

To his base, Lantigua’s selections demonstrate that Latinos are getting their due. To critics, the picks are the work of an arrogant powerbroker who hands out positions to less-than-qualified supporters and nominates municipal employees to vacancies on city boards where conflicts might arise.

A lawsuit filed against Lantigua in August by Attorney General Martha Coakley illustrates how the mayor continues to get into hot water. Coakley alleges Lantigua committed a wide variety of campaign finance violations, including accepting illegal cash contributions, receiving donations that exceeded legal limits, having public employees solicit funds on his behalf, and maintaining inaccurate or incomplete records.

While mayor, Curley served a five-month stint in federal prison on mail fraud charges until President Harry Truman pardoned him. While prosecutors continue their investigations into corruption

within the Lantigua administration, the mayor himself has remained largely above the fray, with only a brief, mysterious appearance before an Essex County grand jury in May. Months of probes with no charges filed against the mayor, however, fuel a widely-held belief in Lawrence that state and federal authorities do not have a strong case against him.

STREET PAVING CHANGED MINDS

Lawrence is the municipal basket case of Massachusetts, practically a ward of the state. Beacon Hill props up the city’s finances with millions of dollars in state aid, more than any other municipality receives. In 2013, state taxpayers provided 67.5 percent of Lawrence’s revenues. The city has the state’s highest unemployment rate (14.9 percent in August) and about one-third of the city’s nearly 80,000 residents live below the federal poverty level. Because of chronic low performance by the city’s schools and millions of dollars in deficits in past municipal budgets, a state-appointed receiver runs the school district, while a state-appointed fiscal overseer rides herd on the budget and monitors spending.



usually don’t fare any better in reaching him.

Lantigua’s Twitter feeds and Facebook posts are almost exclusively in Spanish. One exception came just before the preliminary election on Facebook, when he posted a new campaign slogan in English, “Keep Calm and Vote Lantigua,” based on a popular t-shirt. A campaign tune in Spanish goes to the heart of the message he drums into his base. Translated into English, one refrain says, “He’s changed the city, the streets are in order. We’re in line with our Mayor Lantigua. The best. Don’t change it.”

Beyond the charm, Lantigua knows how to play bare-knuckled politics. During the first recall petition drive against him in 2011, a list of people who signed the petition mysteriously appeared online. During the second recall drive, some people on the original list, apparently intimidated by the earlier move, refused to sign the papers.

Like all mayors, Lantigua steers some city jobs toward his friends and allies. Like Curley, he sometimes makes appointments with little regard for appearances or a candidate’s suitability for a position. Lantigua promoted Melix Bonilla to the position of deputy police chief and demoted the veteran officer who held the job after Bonilla ran the mayor’s campaign in 2009. Three years later, an Essex

Any one of these issues could have dominated the preliminary election. But none of them did. Instead, street paving in Lawrence was the number one topic of conversation in the weeks leading up to the vote. In the past two years, dozens of thoroughfares have been paved. Meanwhile, blue and white signs trumpeting the work, reading “Lawrence Moving Forward/Mayor William Lantigua,” have sprouted on utility poles along the way.

Pavel Payano, a member of the Lawrence School Committee who did not support any candidate in the preliminary election, says that the repaving projects gave a huge boost to Lantigua, helping him project the image of a mayor working for the community. “A lot of people... completely hated him,” Payano says of attitudes toward Lantigua. “After they saw the streets paved, they completely changed their minds.”

Most of the money for the work came from state road and bridge funds, but the source of money is irrelevant to the average voter. What matters is that streets have been resurfaced, some for the first time in recent memory. That was reason enough for voters in the city’s poorest Latino neighborhoods, and more than a few in the predominately white areas where he is generally unpopular, to vote for the incumbent.

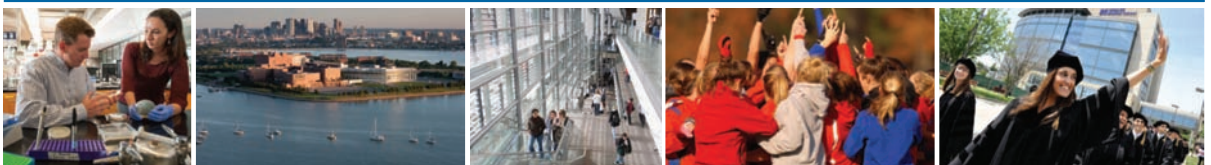
Though Lantigua did not respond to several requests for comment, Melendez was not shy in defending her candidate and friend. A petite, youthful senior with a fondness for red sandals and gold jewelry, Melendez hosts a local radio program popular among the mayor’s fans called *La Voz del Pueblo* (The Voice of the People). She peppers her shows with a Lantigua reelection shout-out, “¡Cuatro años más!” (“Four more years!”).

Melendez arrived in Lawrence in 1959 from Puerto Rico. She is close to the Lantigua family, so much so that Lantigua’s dying mother told her that she would die “in peace because I know Willy is like your son.” When Melendez herself ran for mayor unsuccessfully in 2001, Lantigua was her campaign manager. She helped out when he ran for state representative the next year.

In her office at Escuela General Donovan, a one-stop shop for adult education classes, voter registration, and other social services that she manages, Melendez outlines Lantigua’s successes. As a state representative, she says, Lantigua succeeded in funneling millions in state dollars into social service organizations like Lawrence Community-Works and Arlington Community Trabajando.

“I believe in the work he’s doing,” Melendez says of Lantigua’s leadership of the city. When asked about the

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Mayoral candidate Dan Rivera says Lantigua is not invincible.



Campaign workers hold signs on preliminary election day in September.

criticism of his tenure, she counters, “Tell me the mayor of a city that has not made mistakes.”

For all the criticism of his tenure, Lantigua inherited a city on the brink of financial collapse. Since the state stepped in, Lantigua and the city council have produced balanced budgets without dipping into reserves. Lantigua has a good working relationship with Robert Nunes, the state’s fiscal overseer, and the city’s bond ratings are satisfactory.

In 2011, the state designated the Lawrence schools as chronically underperforming and sent in Jeff Riley, a former Boston Public Schools official, to run a multi-year turnaround project. In many communities, that development would be viewed as a major embarrassment. But Lantigua shaped it to his advantage, claiming that he invited the state to take over the district. Most residents continue to hail the move, and recent improvements in MCAS scores are a welcome sign for Lawrence, and, by extension, Lantigua.

David Torrisi, a former state representative from North Andover who served in the Legislature with Lantigua, says he was “great at getting earmarks” into state spending bills. But Torrisi, who represented several Lawrence precincts, is less certain about Lantigua’s skills as a chief executive of a mid-sized city. “When it came to managing a \$240 million operation, yeah, I think a lot of us had doubts that he had the capacity to do that,” he says.

Lantigua’s supporters see a powerful double standard at work. They take pride in a Latino leader who they see guiding his city through the turbulent waters of municipal budgets and school crises, while the news media largely ignores the mayor’s success stories. Instead, reporters pillory him almost daily about missteps. Meanwhile, say

Lantigua backers, there is little dwelling on misdeeds during the administration of Lantigua predecessor Michael Sullivan, a white politician whose former director of information technology quietly pleaded guilty to federal fraud charges involving millions of dollars with little further scrutiny from journalists.

WHOLE NEW BALLGAME

There are rumblings of dissatisfaction with Lantigua, but roughly 3,000 votes separated him from Rivera in the preliminary election. Lantigua won nearly 48 percent of the vote. Of nearly 37,000 registered voters, about one third turned out, an impressive number for a municipal elec-

“You can’t be just the mayor of paving streets. We need more cops and more jobs,” says challenger Dan Rivera.

tion. Rivera reeled in 23 percent and won three precincts in south Lawrence, where most white voters live. Lantigua took the city’s other 21 precincts.

Rivera thinks Lantigua can be defeated. “The media wants to write the story that he is invincible,” Rivera says. “He’s just not.” He points out that 20,000 voters did not turn out and that Lantigua’s opponents received a combined 6,251 votes, 52 percent of the tally, to the mayor’s 5,737 votes.

"That's his number," says Rivera. "He's got nowhere to grow."

Rivera, who is half Dominican and half Puerto Rican, was born in the Bronx in 1970 and came to Lawrence as a child. He served in the first Gulf War and later earned a MBA from Suffolk University. He has an easy-going manner compared to the intense Lantigua, and enjoys delving into broad public policy issues. Rivera fashions himself as the "good government" reform candidate with a command of such issues as municipal finance. (He chairs the city's budget committee.)

Rivera's hope is that the young voters he's courting turn out the way they did for Barack Obama in 2008 and 2012. The problem for Rivera is young voters are not likely to be as enthused for a mayoral race as they were for a historic presidential contest. Rivera also will have to get white anti-Lantigua voters who stayed home in the preliminary election to come out for the final. And he needs to persuade Rep. Marcos Devers's supporters that unseating Lantigua won't backfire on them. Devers came in third in the preliminary election and, along with two other runners-up, pledged to support whoever opposed Lantigua in the final. That decision may earn Devers a Lantigua-backed opponent should he run for reelection next year.

Rivera knows he has plenty of work to do, but feels voters want change. Some Lawrence insiders say the qualities that have made Lantigua popular in sections of Lawrence have hurt the city's reputation beyond its borders. That poor reputation, the insiders say, means the city has less appeal for outside investors looking for new opportunities. Instead, those investors migrate to more politically stable Merrimack Valley communities such as Haverhill or Lowell that offer many of the same benefits, without the drawbacks of an erratic mayor.

"You can't just be the mayor of paving streets," Rivera says of Lantigua. "We need more cops and more jobs."

But few people in Lawrence are talking about cops or jobs or schools. It's all about Willy Lantigua, who is making his last hurrah. (Under the current city charter, a mayor can serve only two consecutive terms.)

Richard Padova, who teaches geography, history, and government at Northern Essex Community College, says the controversy surrounding Lantigua doesn't faze his political supporters. "We've heard of Teflon presidents like Reagan. I guess he is a Teflon mayor," Padova says. "He has a committed base of supporters; they seem to be unshakeable."

Many people think the only way Lantigua can lose in November is if he is hit with an indictment at the eleventh hour. Yet even that would not necessarily make any difference. "I don't think that he is going to be indicted," says García, the longtime Lantigua supporter. "If an injustice like that happens, we are going to re-elect him anyway." **CW**



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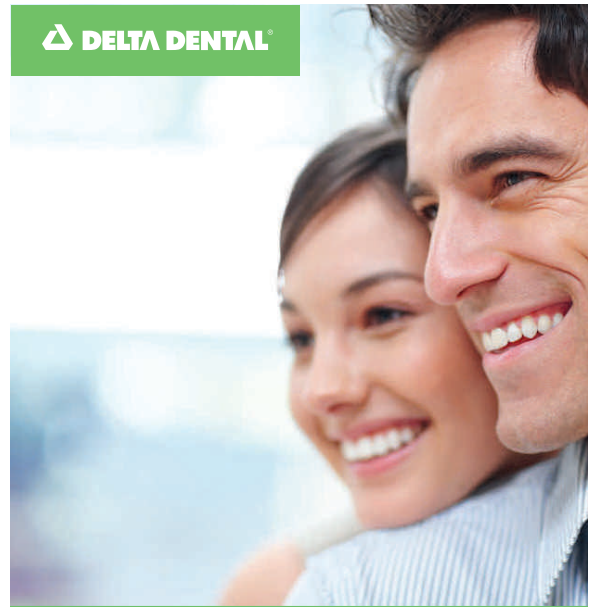
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The zombie coal plant

Environmentalists want to kill off Brayton Point. The Patrick administration says let the market do the dirty work.

BY PAUL McMORROW

Jay O'Hara didn't have to see the gun to get spooked. The sound of the bullet hitting the chamber of a police officer's rifle was enough. "I heard the bolt action of the rifle over my shoulder," O'Hara recalls. "It wasn't pointed, but it's locked and loaded. It's an unmistakable, chilling sound."

O'Hara, a 31-year-old Cape Cod resident, had expected the heat. He and a fellow climate change activist, Ken Ward, had just piloted a 30-foot lobster boat, the Henry David T., up to the mouth of the Taunton River, and dropped anchor next to the massive Brayton Point power plant. Somerset's Brayton

Point is the largest coal-fired power plant in New England. The men lay at anchor just off Brayton's dock, sandwiched between the power plant's massive dockside pile of coal, and a 689-foot freighter, the Energy Enterprise, looking to add 40,000 tons of coal to that pile.

The pair sat in a boat named for Thoreau, the father of civil disobedience, flying a banner that read "Coal is stupid." For 10 hours, as the Coast Guard and armed Somerset police officers and the baffled crew of the Energy Enterprise looked on, the Henry David T's crew prevented the delivery of coal to a plant that



had burned 1.2 million pounds of the stuff in the year prior. “It is our intention to remain moored here to ensure that this coal is not brought in and burned in New England,” O’Hara radioed to the Energy Enterprise’s captain. The captain’s response: “Yeah, this coal is coming from the United States, West Virginia. What’s the problem with that?”

O’Hara and Ward are facing a raft of charges stemming from the May protest aboard the Henry David T. But their action has sparked a wave of protest surrounding Brayton Point. Brayton is the second-largest power plant in Massachusetts. For decades, it has also

been the biggest polluter in New England. All summer, environmental activists marched on Brayton, rallying outside the plant’s gates, shouting down the use of coal power in New England, and calling on Gov. Deval Patrick to shut the enormous plant down. It’s a movement that’s far more reminiscent of the protests that surrounded the construction of nuclear power plants in the 1970s than anything local activists have mounted more recently.

Those protests also stand out because, in addition to being enormous sources of greenhouse gas emissions, coal-fired power plants such as Brayton Point

An aerial view of the coal-fired Brayton Point power plant in Somerset.



have faced immense financial hurdles lately. So instead of trying to tear down a behemoth like the 1970s nuclear industry, the anti-coal activists marching outside Brayton Point are trying to push the plant into a waiting grave.

Old-line coal plants such as Brayton Point are zombies shuffling through the Massachusetts electric market. Three coal plants in Massachusetts and Connecticut have shut down since 2011, and three other plants (one in Holyoke, and two in New Hampshire) appear to be on shaky financial ground, thanks to the flood of cheap natural gas that's hit the market in recent years. They're the walking dead, groaning and rotting and less than fully alive. And, as Brayton Point shows, they can be surprisingly tough to kill off.

Brayton Point's new owner, the private equity firm Energy Capital Partners, recently filed for permission to close the coal plant in 2017. But the firm looks to be in

the money until then. Energy Capital Partners bought Brayton for pennies on the dollar, and the plant has been doing decent business lately. It still has contracts to sell power to the grid through 2016. So although the death of New England's biggest coal plant is now in sight, it will come paired with millions of pounds of burned coal, and a tidy profit. The environmental activists rallying against Brayton Point grew impatient with state officials, who have been content to wait for market economics to finish off the zombies. The market is squeezing coal out, but for some, the end is coming too slowly for comfort.

A DIRTY WORKHORSE

Coal has been, historically, the workhorse of the Massachusetts power plant fleet. It's also the dirtiest fossil fuel in the state's energy portfolio.

Coal releases an enormous amount of carbon dioxide when it burns. The 1990s-vintage natural gas power plants currently pushing coal to the sidelines emit carbon dioxide at roughly half the rate of coal; modern gas-fired plants are even more efficient. Coal also produces other harmful gases (nitrogen oxides and sulfur dioxide), heavy metals like mercury and lead, toxic ash, and carcinogens. During Brayton Point's late '90s heyday, researchers at Harvard's School of Public Health estimated that Brayton Point was responsible for thousands of asthma attacks and 106 premature deaths per year.

Marblehead state Rep. Lori Ehrlich got into local politics by way of public health activism, and she got into public health organizing because of coal. Ehrlich lives directly across the water from Salem Harbor Station, Brayton Point's sister plant. She remembers her young daughters playing on the porch one day, tearing into the kitchen, and leaving "these little black footprints" all over her tile floor. "My first reaction was, I just cleaned the floor!" Ehrlich recalls. "Then I noticed the prints were really greasy, and I wondered, what did they bring in? I went out on the deck, and it was covered in a layer of black soot." She called the plant's owner at the time, Pacific Gas and Electric, and the plant sent an insurance adjuster to her house. A month later, the power plant operator offered to power wash Ehrlich's deck, just as it frequently washed the greasy cars and detailed the soot-covered boats of Ehrlich's Marblehead neighbors. "They missed the point," she says. "It's not about the deck. It's about, what are my daughters breathing?"

Coal's fall has been swift and dramatic. In 2001, coal fueled 17% of the region's electricity. Now that's just 3 %.

The federal Clean Air Act grandfathered old coal-burning power plants out of meeting the government's strictest air pollution controls, but federal and state environmental regulations have gradually brought pressure on plants like Brayton, which was built in 1963, to clean up or shut down. The Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative cap-and-trade market pays plants that run cleanly, and drains cash from the northeast's dirtiest power plants. Mystic Generating Station in Everett, once reliant on dirty oil-fired boilers, has shut down older generating units and repositioned itself as a natural gas-fired plant. Dominion, the former

owner of both Brayton Point and Salem, agreed to retire the smaller Salem plant after getting hit with a 2010 emissions lawsuit by the Conservation Law Foundation and HealthLink, the grassroots advocacy group Ehrlich co-founded. In recent years, Dominion spent \$1 billion installing smokestack scrubbers and a pair of massive water cooling towers to comply with state emissions regulations and a federal Clean Water Act lawsuit. The regulatory net continues to tighten: New EPA emissions standards will essentially ban the construction of new coal plants, and EPA rules cracking down on existing coal plants are expected next year.

Environmental regulations carry compliance costs—especially for coal, an inherently dirty fuel. Tougher emissions standards aren't game-changers on their own. But New England power plants have been facing stricter environmental regulations at a time when ample supplies of cheap domestic natural gas have turned the region's electricity market upside down. According to data from the US Energy Information Administration, in 2008, gas-fired power plants in Massachusetts spent more than three times what coal plants spent on fuel to produce the same amount of energy; by 2010, the cost of natural gas had halved, while the cost of coal had risen slightly. Since gas-fired plants run far more cost-efficiently than coal-fired plants do, supplies of cheap natural gas have allowed gas-fired power plant operators to sell power more cheaply than rival coal plants. Coal, once the region's dominant fuel, has been priced onto the sidelines.

"You hear all this stuff about Obama's war on coal, and it's nonsense," says David Schlissel, a Belmont-based energy consultant. "It's the economics of generating coal power. The real threat is gas, renewables, and energy efficiency all coming together. Throw it all in the hopper, and coal's at risk."

Coal's fall has been swift and dramatic. In 2001, coal fueled 17 percent of New England's electricity; in 2012, that figure had dropped to just 3 percent. These coal plants were built to run around the clock, but they've been running only sporadically, to supplement gas-fired power during spikes in electric demand. Between 2007 and 2012, Brayton Point's electric output dropped by 76 percent. Holyoke's Mount Tom coal plant saw electric generation drop by 90 percent between 2007 and 2011; its owners recently filed a bid to de-list from the regional electric auction—often the first step toward retiring the plant. AES Thames, a coal-fired plant just outside New London, Connecticut, filed for bankruptcy protection in 2011 and sits idle today. NRG Energy shut down Somerset Station, a plant two miles up the road from Brayton Point, in early 2011. Gas competition turned Dominion's Salem Harbor plant into a money loser. Dominion wrote down the value of Salem

Harbor to zero in late 2010, then shut down half the plant's coal boilers, and dumped it at fire sale prices. Salem's new owner, Footprint Power, is trying to convert the plant to gas power.

Coal plants aren't alone in struggling to compete with cheap natural gas. New England's once-robust oil-fired plants have been all but sidelined since the mid-2000s by the high cost of fuel. Nuclear power plants are seeing waves of closures across the country—including Entergy's Vermont Yankee nuclear plant—because low electricity prices suddenly don't allow them to keep up with their plants' sizable maintenance costs. But coal's fall is notable because of its magnitude—falling from nearly 30 percent of the Massachusetts market in 2001, to under 6 percent in 2012—and because of the sheer number of plants that are falling to market pressures.

"Sometimes companies claim major capital expenditures are causing plants to retire, it's a capital event they can't meet," Schlissel says. "But a lot are retired just because the owners see the [profit] spread, and end up saying, this ain't worth it."

THE ANTI-COAL CROWD

Brayton Point's cooling towers dominate the surrounding landscape. The twin 500-foot cylinders stand taller than Boston's Custom House tower. Dominion poured \$550 million over the last several years into building the massive concrete structures, which divert wastewater from the coal plant's turbine rooms away from the Taunton River and

Mount Hope Bay.

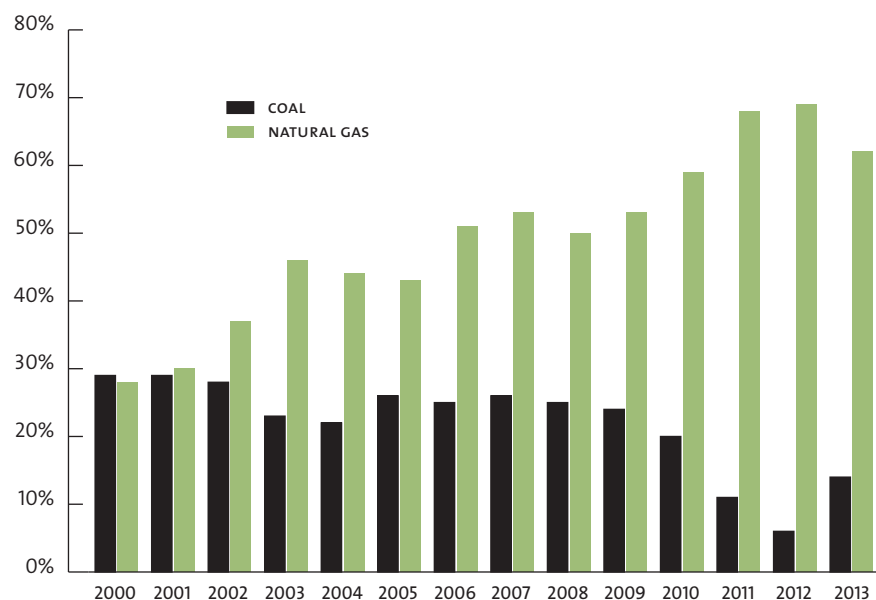
The contrast between the cooling towers and the low-slung residential neighborhoods that surround the plant is visually jarring. But the first time Adam Greenberg arrived at the Somerset power plant, it wasn't the scale of the place that got to him. Greenberg couldn't get over the location of the town baseball field, which sits directly across the street from the coal plant. Greenberg met scores of climate change activists at the ball field this summer, for a protest march to Brayton Point's front gates. The brevity of the march from ball field to coal plant was unsettling.

Greenberg, a 24-year old Milton native, is part of a burgeoning environmental movement that's redefining the politics of energy in New England. It's a movement that's taking a confrontational approach to climate change in the region. This protest movement is demanding swift action, not gradual change. And its biggest target is the region's most toxic power plant, Brayton Point.

New England's other coal plants have either closed or faded in relative quiet. Salem Harbor, Somerset Station, AES Thames, and Mount Tom were all battered by market forces and hemmed in by groups like the Conservation Law Foundation on the regulatory front. Environmental groups worked to mitigate the coal plants' impact by tightening pollution controls on the plants, and the economics of producing electricity in New England pushed the plants out of business.

Brayton Point is up against something completely different. Waves of protesters aligned with the 350 move-

POWER GENERATION IN MASSACHUSETTS



Source: US Energy Information Administration

ment, a national network of climate-change activists working to slash carbon emissions, have descended on the plant; they're arguing that Brayton is fundamentally at odds with the state's anti-global warming laws, and they're calling on Gov. Patrick to shut down the coal plant immediately. They have no interest in waiting on market forces to do the job. This year, they've rallied outside the plant, staged trespassing arrests at the facility, and set up solar panels and portable wind turbines in the shadows of the coal smoke stacks. In August, Greenberg and hundreds of other protesters staged a six-day march from Brayton Point's

The Henry David T., blocking a delivery of coal, carried a banner that said “Coal is stupid.”



front door to Hyannis, near the future site of Cape Wind.

“Brayton Point is bad for the climate and bad for health,” Greenberg argues. “Brayton’s such a massive emitter. It’s doing the most damage. Coal is harmful, it’s dangerous, and a lot of money is being spent to keep it in place.” Greenberg cites the Harvard study on premature deaths tied to Brayton Point’s emissions, arguing, “It’s not morally acceptable to wait for something bad to go away when we

Environmentalists say it’s not morally acceptable to wait if something can be done today.

have the ability to act today. We have to give it a firm kick out the door.”

Jay O’Hara, who piloted the Henry David T. during the boat’s blockade of the Brayton Point coal dock, notes that there’s been a steady ramping up in activism around coal power in New England. O’Hara has been a grassroots climate change organizer for the better part of a decade. He had previously kicked around the idea of staging a protest action against trains delivering coal to the Mount Tom plant in Holyoke, or kayaking against coal freighters in Salem, but couldn’t get any traction. This spring’s Bray-

ton Point protest was different. O’Hara and Ward’s blockade has galvanized other protests against the coal plant.

The blockade “was not civil disobedience,” O’Hara argues. “It was direct action. It was about, how do we say, this is what’s right, and this is what’s wrong? And show it by putting my body there? The question for me is, are we going to let our future be dictated by markets, or by people? Brayton is one of many, many problems out there, and if we’re going to solve the climate problem, we have to start shutting them down.”

The surge in environmental activism around Brayton Point exposes a sizable rift in the state’s energy and environmental policy. The state’s 2008 Global Warming Solutions Act commits Massachusetts to cutting greenhouse gas emissions to 20 percent of what they were in 1990 by the year 2050. It’s difficult to see how the state gets anywhere near that mark with coal power in the equation, given how dirty coal power is: This year, coal plants have accounted for 13 percent of the electricity produced in Massachusetts, but are responsible for 35 percent of all power plant carbon dioxide emissions. Still, state officials can only go so far in reshaping the energy market. The Patrick administration has been aggressive in creating renewable energy subsidies, and shoehorning projects like Cape Wind into the the state’s electric market. Ultimately, though, Patrick can’t give the Brayton Point protesters what they want. He’s relying on a combination of environmental regulations and market economics to push coal power aside. He can’t, and won’t, shut down Brayton on his own.

“Governors don’t get to go around shutting down private businesses,” Patrick says. The governor argues that

the state's push on clean energy and energy efficiency has enabled the transition away from coal in Salem, and that, "over time, we won't have the need for coal-firing plants." At the same time, he insists, "As long as people want the electricity to come on when they flip the switch, we're going to have to do this gradually."

State Rep. Patricia Haddad, the high-ranking lawmaker from Somerset, bristles at the sight of out-of-town activists descending on the coal plant. "There are some who would say government is too intrusive, now we want to go shut down this business?" she says. Brayton Point's owners, Haddad argues, are "going to have to make money before they can pour money into the plant and do something different. The market is going to drive this. It's not going to be a snap of the fingers."

END COMES SLOWLY

The deregulated Massachusetts energy market responds to classic economic forces. Coal power landed on the ropes in New England, not because environmental and public health advocates now have a greater appreciation of its ills, but because it can't compete with natural gas. The basic assumption behind Massachusetts's climate goals is that, given the right combination of environmental regulations and clean energy subsidies, the free market will bury coal.

The fall of Salem Harbor, Somerset Station, Mount Tom and Connecticut's AES Thames seemed to confirm the state's basic bet, that it could count on market forces to deliver a coal-free environment. Brayton is heading down a similar path, but on a far different timeline. The plant will close in 2017, but not before its new owners squeeze out the last remaining drops of profit. Closure lies behind a huge pile of burned coal.

Competition from natural gas crippled Brayton Point, and saddled the plant's former owner, Dominion, with substantial losses. As it did in Salem, Dominion recently decided to cut its losses, selling Brayton Point to a private equity firm from New Jersey. The Salem Harbor sale resulted in the plant's shutdown and likely redevelopment into a gas-fired facility, but at Brayton, it appears that the fire sale has given the troubled plant a stay of execution. Brayton Point isn't the behemoth it once was, but until it closes, it remains somewhat profitable.

Dominion bought Brayton Point, Salem Harbor, and a small gas-fired plant in Providence in 2005, for \$642 million in cash. Brayton, which is more than twice as large as Salem, was the prize. Within a few years, competition from natural gas turned the deal upside down on Dominion. The company's annual reports show that Salem lost money

in 2010, 2011, and 2012; Dominion eventually wrote down Salem's value to less than \$1 million, based on the plant's inability to make money, and dumped it overboard in 2012. Dominion put Brayton Point up for sale in late 2012, shortly after shedding Salem. Months later, the Conservation Law Foundation issued a report on Brayton's financials that reads like an obituary.

The CLF report, co-authored by Schlissel, the Belmont-based energy consultant, outlined a bleak financial future for Brayton. The plant was losing the fight with natural gas, and running at a fraction of its capacity. The plant's earnings had dropped from \$345 million in 2009, to around \$24 million in 2012, at a time when the plant was wrestling with \$1 billion in new costs—the plant's new cooling towers and air pollution scrubbers. The size of those improvements, Schlissel argues, shows how quickly the ground shifted under Dominion: In 2005, Brayton Point was worth a billion-dollar upgrade, but not long after those improvements came online, Dominion sold Brayton "for piddling," he says. Brayton and a pair of midwestern power plants netted Dominion \$472 million, but industry observers believe that Brayton was a throw-in to the sale—the property that the buyer, Energy

The plant will close in 2017, but it's still somewhat profitable. Closure lies behind a huge pile of burned coal.

Capital Partners, had to take to get the others. The sale closed earlier this year.

Energy Capital Partners, Brayton's new owner, is a private equity fund that invests in energy firms. It owns a handful of natural gas-fired power plants in New England, but Brayton is the firm's first foray into coal power. It hasn't said much about its plans for Brayton, other than to blame the plant's 2017 retirement on a failed bid to secure above-market electricity prices. Some energy observers believe ECP will transition Brayton to gas power, as is happening at Salem. Until that happens, though, Brayton could be a profitable short-term investment. Dominion ate the \$1 billion tied to Brayton's cooling towers and scrubbers. Except for the cost of the scrubbers and cooling towers, Brayton was never unprofitable, as Salem was. Dominion sold because it didn't anticipate making the huge profits it would need to make its \$1 billion back. Energy Capital Partners can tolerate the thin profits that CLF projected for Brayton over the

next several years, because the firm doesn't have much invested in the plan in the first place.

More importantly, Brayton Point is suddenly a lot busier than it was just a few months ago. It produced almost as much energy in the first half of 2013 as it did in all of 2012. After accounting for a scant 6 percent of the Massachusetts power market last year, coal has fired 14 percent of the state's power this year. That's still a far cry from where coal stood before the shale gas boom, but it's also a big uptick off the lows that drove other coal plants out of business. Brayton was busy in the cold winter months, when a spike in natural gas prices meant that older coal plants like Brayton could suddenly compete on price. Schlissel believes a similar dynamic may come into play this winter. Brayton also successfully bid in to ISO New England's 2016-2017 energy auction. The successful bid means that, unlike plants like Mount Tom, Brayton's new owners should be able to compete on electric prices with gas—at least during portions of the year.

In the long run, argues Shanna Cleveland, a staff attorney with the Conservation Law Foundation, cheap natural gas and aggressive energy efficiency programs will put downward pressures on energy prices, making it difficult for expensive old coal plants to compete. "We firmly

believe," she says, "there's no profit in burning coal. It's the same conclusion power plant operators around the country have come to." Schlissel adds, "The region is fairly aggressive on energy efficiency, and there's more wind coming, more solar, so I'd say there's a lot of uncertainty, a lot of risk. A lot of risk."

In the short term, though, industry observers believe the combination of forward contracts, low investment costs, and seasonal spikes in demand make the plant somewhat profitable. Energy Capital Partners can afford to take a long view on the plant's future because they're making money now.

Across town, the shuttered Somerset Station power plant sits dark, ringed by rusty fences, and abandoned. The coal plant's new owners took control of the facility less than two years ago, and the property is already in foreclosure, hundreds of thousands of dollars behind on its property taxes, and heading for the auction block. At Brayton Point, though, coal's death march has slowed to a crawl. The freighters still tie up at the mouth of the Taunton River and offload coal by the ton. In fact, Brayton has been busy enough this year that it has reclaimed an ignominious title it had recently lost: that of New England's biggest power plant polluter. **CW**

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Rocky road

Boston's Renaissance
charter school
hits another bump.
Is it back on track?

BY MICHAEL JONAS | PHOTOGRAPHS BY J. CAPPUCCHIO



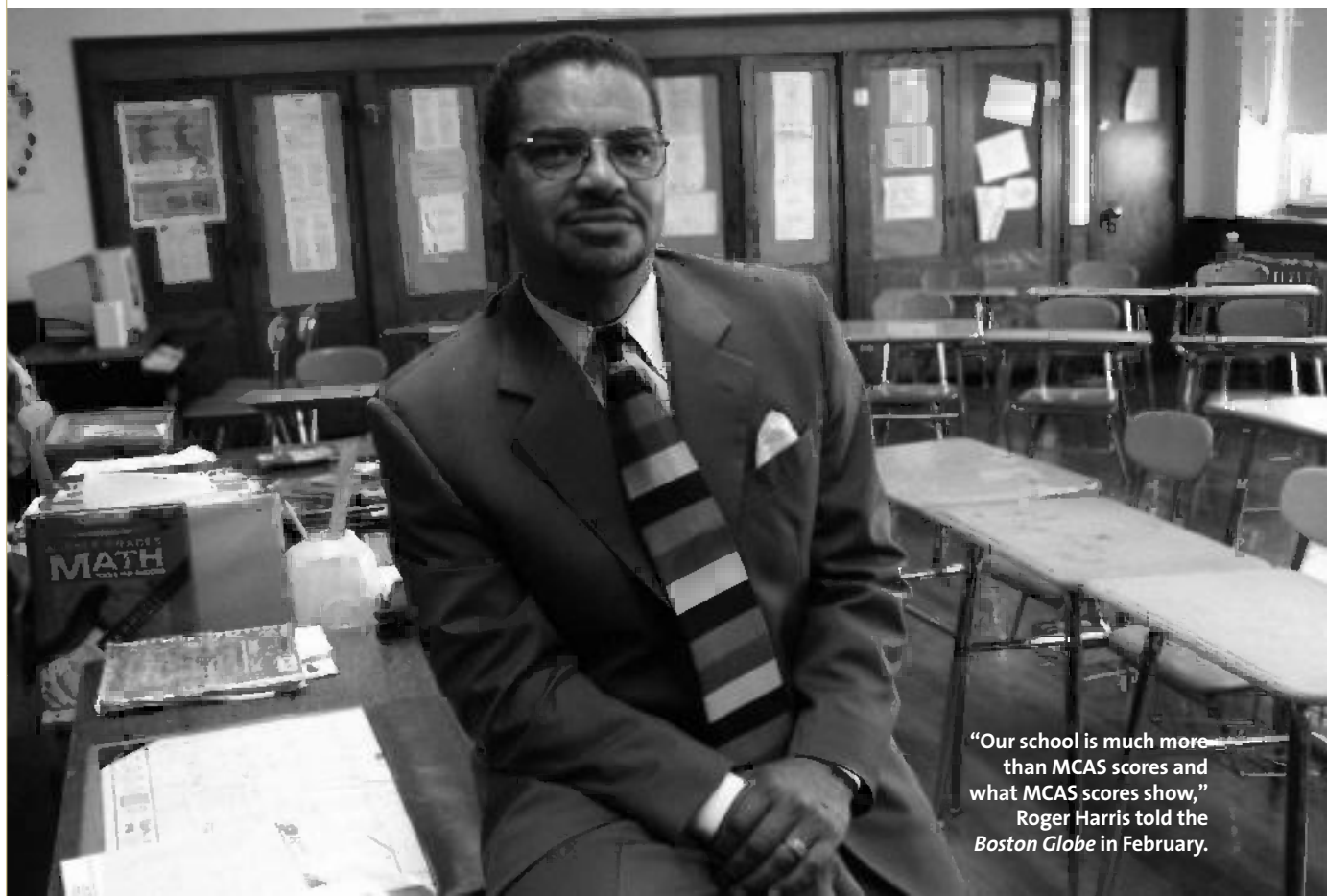


IT WAS AN UNWELCOME, but not unfamiliar, spot for the Renaissance Charter Public School to find itself in. In February, the state Board of Elementary and Secondary Education voted for the second time to place the Boston school on probation because of faltering student achievement. It's been a long, up and down ride for Renaissance, one of the state's first charter schools.

The move by state officials came just over

two years after the school was taken off an earlier period of probation. At that time, Renaissance was showing strong gains on the state MCAS test and the state renewed its charter for another five years.

If the upswing seemed to demonstrate Renaissance's capacity to finally get on track, the sharp decline in scores that followed added another troubling chapter to the school's history of struggles.



"Our school is much more than MCAS scores and what MCAS scores show," Roger Harris told the *Boston Globe* in February.

"It's not where it needs to be as a mature charter school," state education commissioner Mitchell Chester said in an interview. "And more disturbingly, when I look at results for the last several years, they're not moving in the right direction."

English scores had been largely flat, while math scores took a sharp dive, with proficiency rates dropping from 54 percent in 2009 to 36 percent in 2012.

Renaissance leaders acknowledged the need to improve academic results, and the latest MCAS results, released in September, show their students are doing that. At the same time, when the state moved earlier this year to put Renaissance on probation, the school's leader bristled. The long-time head of the school countered with an argument that he has put forward before, one that cuts against the grain of the charter school movement nationally and the focus of Boston's high-achieving charter school sector in particular.

"Our school is much more than MCAS scores and what MCAS scores show," Roger Harris told the *Boston Globe* in February.

No one would dispute that. There is much that goes on in schools that can't be reduced to test scores alone. And Renaissance, a K-6 school serving 944 mostly low-income, minority students, has been recognized for doing an exceptionally good job at those things, with a rich

music and arts curriculum and an ambitious foreign language initiative that has introduced school-wide Mandarin Chinese instruction, something usually only seen in the wealthiest suburban districts. The school houses vision and dental clinics, providing "wrap-around" services meant to address a broader set of issues that can hold back student development and learning.

Renaissance officials and parents also point to a school curriculum and culture designed to help children build character and poise. Those are areas that are receiving increasing attention in education circles, where some argue that such non-cognitive "social-emotional" skills are as important as performance in academic subjects.

But at charter schools in particular, the expectation is that such a focus and a full offering of enrichment activities come along with, not in place of, strong results on core academics. That has made the Renaissance saga an ongoing challenge for state education officials, raising questions about the proper level of oversight for charter schools, including how to handle charters that experience repeated downturns in academic performance.

TIME OF TUMULT

It wasn't supposed to be like this. When Renaissance opened its doors in 1995 to great fanfare, it was heralded as a flag-

ship in the state's entry into the new world of charter schools. Authorized by the 1993 Education Reform Act, charter schools are public schools that operate autonomously from local districts. They have broad freedom over staffing, curriculum, and budgeting, and nearly all operate without unionized teachers and the thick contracts that reform advocates have said can interfere with the ability to deliver quality schools, particularly in low-achieving urban districts. In exchange for that independence, charters were expected to deliver good results for students.

A study released this year by Stanford University's Center for Research on Education Outcomes, widely recognized as the leading source of research on charter schools, singled out Boston as having the highest-performing charter sector in the country. While a number of Boston's 16 charter schools have eye-popping achievement scores, with proficiency rates of greater than 90 percent in math and English, Renaissance has always lagged far behind this high-flying cohort.

The school faced challenges from the beginning. For its first seven years, Renaissance was managed by Edison Schools, a for-profit education management organization under which school operations were chaotic from the start. Also hampering the school was its location. Renaissance was housed in downtown Boston, in a Park Square building that was the original site of the University of Massachusetts Boston. The 13-story building was hardly the ideal setting for nearly 1,500 rambunctious elementary school students, the huge population the school started with.

Renaissance has never been part of the high-flying cohort of Boston charter schools with eye-popping scores.

Boston mayoral candidate John Connolly, who has made education a centerpiece of his campaign, often points to the three years he spent teaching in the 1990s. One of those years was at the Renaissance school, where he taught sixth grade. Connolly is a strong charter school proponent, but he told WBUR radio in September that he nonetheless knows firsthand charters can also fail, calling Renaissance an "unmitigated disaster" during his time there.

In 2000, the state renewed the school's charter after its initial five years despite lagging performance. In 2005, however, when Renaissance came up for its next renewal,

the state board of education gave it only provisional approval, attaching strict conditions for academic improvement that the school had to meet by 2007. "There has not been any significant increase in overall student performance [at Renaissance] during the course of its charter," read the state report on the school's first 10 years of operation. At the time, a majority of fourth graders, for example, failed to reach proficiency on the English MCAS, while only 9 percent of them scored proficient in math, compared with 24 percent of Boston's district public school students and 42 percent of fourth-graders statewide.

The problems at Renaissance came to a dramatic head just before the renewal as the school's board of trustees, losing confidence in Harris's leadership, voted to fire the veteran school principal ("In need of a Renaissance," *CW*, Fall 2005). Harris, a prominent black educator, arrived at Renaissance in its third year after serving as a Boston public school principal at the much-acclaimed Timilty Middle School in Roxbury.

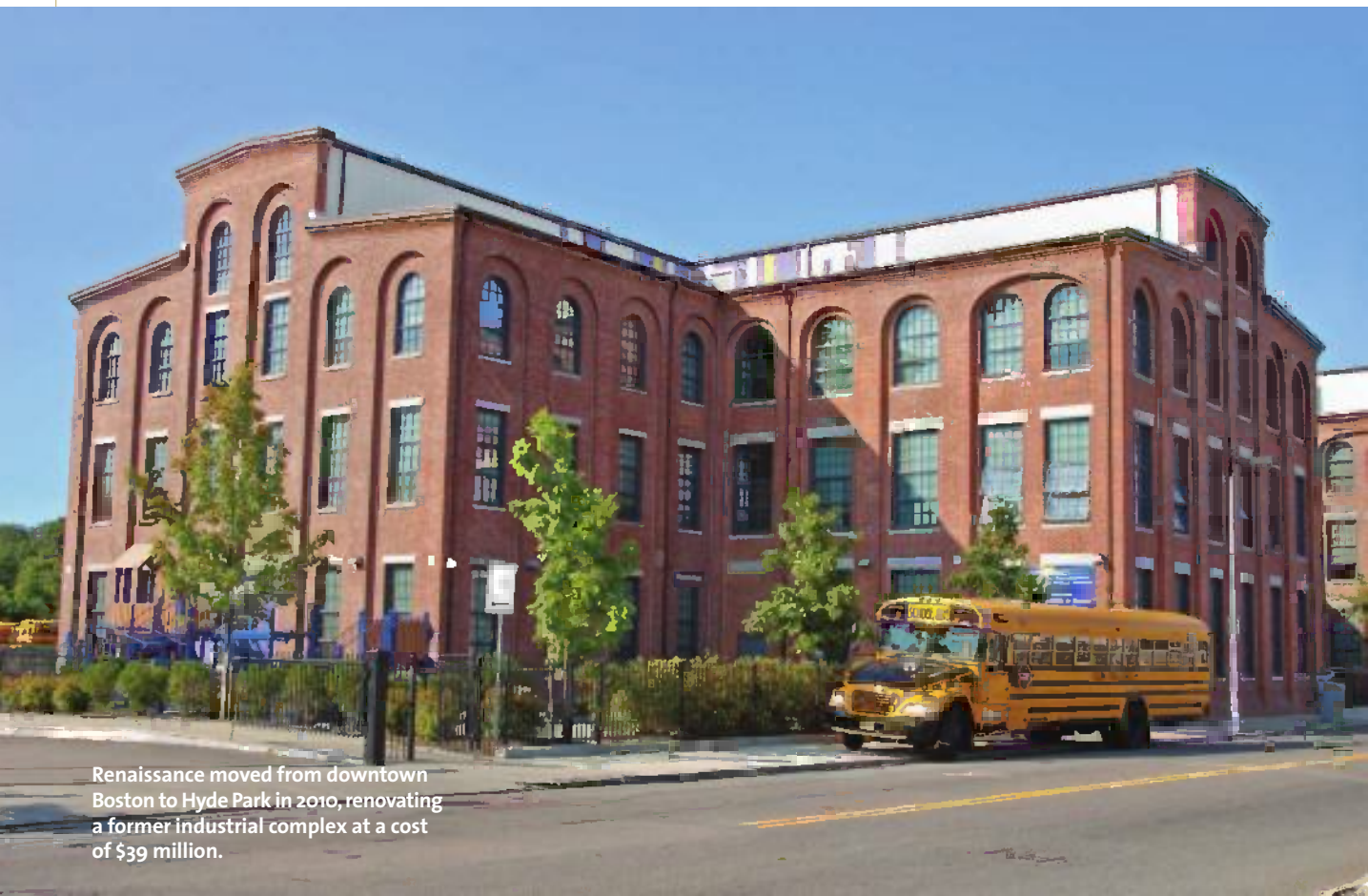
The showdown was filled with political intrigue and Beacon Hill power plays, as African-American members of Boston's State House delegation aggressively pushed back at the move to oust Harris. Under pressure, the school's trustees reversed their vote. In an unusual move for a state official, David Driscoll, then the state commissioner of education, even waded into the fray, urging the school's board to drop the matter. Harris stayed on, while most members of the board resigned.

Driscoll hardly sounded a note of confidence in the school, however. At the same time that the state renewed the Renaissance charter with strict conditions, two other struggling Boston schools had their charters revoked. "Whereas the other two were Fs, you could say Renaissance was a D-minus, particularly in the area of student achievement," Driscoll told *CommonWealth* at the time. "It's clearly not a success story."

State officials viewed Renaissance's huge student population—it was one of the biggest charter schools in the state—as a further impediment to its turnaround. In addition to insisting that the school ratchet up its academic performance, it was ordered to reduce enrollment to 1,240 by phasing out its middle-school grades. Renaissance was also ordered to give up plans it had to eventually extend the school through 12th grade.

Two years later, in 2007, with the school not meeting the academic achievement goals the state had set as conditions of the charter renewal, Renaissance was placed on formal probation. The state added more conditions to the school's charter, requiring that it relocate to a new building better suited to an elementary school and that it reduce further its enrollment to 880 students.

In 2009, the state board voted to renew the school's charter, and a year later it removed it from probation.



Renaissance moved from downtown Boston to Hyde Park in 2010, renovating a former industrial complex at a cost of \$39 million.

Renaissance had redoubled its focus on academics and was showing strong results, a striking turnaround from the years of flagging performance. Proficiency rates on the English portion of the MCAS went from 37 percent in 2006 to 61 percent in 2009, while math proficiency rose during that time from 24 percent to 54 percent. For most grades and subgroup populations, Renaissance was significantly outperforming Boston's district public school students.

FALL AND RISE

In 2010, Renaissance moved from downtown Boston to a beautiful new \$39 million complex in Hyde Park, a combined renovation of industrial buildings and new construction made possible by sale of the downtown building where the school had been housed. Together with athletic fields and a playground on the six-acre site, the new facility gave Renaissance the type of school setting that it had long aspired to have, and one that state officials had deemed essential for the school's success.

The move was not accompanied by continued academic gains, however. In February of this year, Chester, the state education commissioner, recommended that the state

board of education again place Renaissance on probation, citing performance levels that were "very troubling," especially the decrease in the school's math scores. The board agreed, instructing Renaissance to have an outside consultant help it formulate a plan to improve performance. The probation conditions said the school must show strong improvement by 2014, when the Renaissance

The probation conditions require Renaissance to show strong improvement by 2014 when its charter comes up for renewal.

charter is again up for renewal.

The reduction in enrollment ordered by the state has meant a big cut in the school's budget, which is based on a per-pupil funding formula. The school has eliminated about 50 positions and its budget has been cut by more than \$1 million a year.

Renaissance officials have pointed to those budget and

staffing cuts, as well as the adjustment to a restructuring of its organizational model to better manage its reduced enrollment, as explanations for the multiyear tailing off of scores. "This dip in scores correlates directly to the multifaceted and profound transition the school underwent during this period," school officials wrote in a statement provided to *CommonWealth*.

Renaissance officials initially declined to be interviewed for this story, saying in May that they would talk and welcome a visit to the school after new MCAS scores were available in the fall. In September, however, with new scores available, Renaissance leaders backed off that pledge, refusing to be interviewed or to allow a reporter to visit. Instead, Harris and the chairman of the school's board of trustees, Lennitt Bligen, provided a statement to *CommonWealth* with their account of the school's recent history and the positive course they believe Renaissance is now on.

The school's performance increased markedly in the most recent round of MCAS testing, with particularly sharp gains in math, the subject that had seen the biggest falloff. Just over half (53 percent) of Renaissance students scored proficient in math and 58 percent scored proficient in English. Both of those figures exceed proficiency rates for the Boston public schools. As for demographic

subgroups, black and Hispanic students, who make up 94 percent of the school's population, had English scores placing them in the 91st and 92nd percentiles, respectively, when compared with their peers statewide, according to Renaissance. In math, the school says its black and Hispanic students are in the 79th and 84th percentiles, respectively, among their demographic peers statewide.

Renaissance officials maintain that the reconfiguration of the school leadership structure has strengthened and stabilized the school. Renaissance "has firmly established its operational structure and feels well positioned for high student achievement this year and into the future," Harris and Bligen wrote in their statement.

With the gains in math, Renaissance MCAS proficiency rates are back to levels the school had achieved in 2009 and 2010. It seems plausible that the improvements will be enough to satisfy state officials when they consider whether the school has met the terms of its probation.

BACK ON TRACK?

The rebound at Renaissance is unquestionably good news. The school's history of ups and downs and the repeated intervention of state education officials over the years,



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The Hyde Park location features a track, playground, and garden.



however, raise questions that apply not only to Renaissance but to the charter school movement more broadly. Charter schools are premised on the idea that, given unprecedented autonomy over nearly every aspect of their operation, these schools will generate consistent, high-quality student outcomes.

“There is a bit of a policy paradox here, where the whole core of the philosophy of charter schools is that they have this autonomy and are free from the kind of direct district or state oversight that traditional schools have,” Chester said. “And the paradox there is, when they’re struggling, what’s the state’s role? How much time do we give a charter school before we decide it’s not going to be a success?”

The results of one national study that looked at that question would suggest the best approach is not to give struggling charters too much time at all. CREDO, the Stanford research center, recently looked at the degree to which a charter school’s early track record seems to predict its longer-term performance. The study found that in the vast majority of cases there is, in fact, a close connection.

“Our research shows that if you start wobbling, chances are you’ll stay wobbly,” the center’s director, Margaret Raymond, said at the time of the study’s release. “Similarly, if a school is successful in producing strong academic progress from the start, our analysis shows it will remain a strong and successful school.”

Of course, there can be exceptions to that strong pattern, and Renaissance is out to show that it is one of them.

“Renaissance has proven before that it was capable of turning things around and getting on the right path. That’s a complicating factor,” said Jim Stergios, executive director of the Pioneer Institute, a Boston think tank that says the state should insist on high standards for charter schools.

Massachusetts has seen another charter school that had struggled for many years achieve a dramatic turnaround in performance. In 2009, the Lowell Community Charter School, a K-6 school that opened in 2000, was recommended for closure because of abysmal student performance levels but avoided that fate at the 11th hour. The

state agreed to keep it open, but only if the school undertook a wholesale change in its leadership and board of trustees. Student scores at the school have risen markedly since that time.

The state-mandated consultant’s report on Renaissance, prepared by the research firm WestEd, did not recommend wholesale changes as much as it encouraged the school to continue steps it already seems to have put in place last year before the state stepped in, including new programs and practices related to math instruction.

The report also offers general praise for the atmosphere at Renaissance, saying the “leadership and staff have created a dynamic learning environment for students and adults.” It also points to the enrichment offerings and other parts of the school’s program that aren’t captured in MCAS scores, echoing the themes Harris often sounds.

“Many of the structures and opportunities that make the Boston Renaissance Charter Public School unique and stimulate student interest and disposition toward lifelong learning are not measurable by mathematics and [English] achievement scores alone,” says the consultant report. “These intangibles, and the positive feeling within the [Renaissance] school community as a whole, are unique and can only be experienced through direct observation.”

That description is exactly what drew Kirk Womack and his wife to enroll their three daughters at Renaissance. He says two older daughters had successful runs at the school, while their youngest daughter is excelling in third grade there.

“They have a whole family aspect to everything,” said Womack. “The way that they conduct business and the way that they hold things together—my kids feel comfortable. It’s the rapport that the teachers have with the students, that’s what’s strong for me. I’ll take that over anything. You’ve got to have interpersonal skills, too. You’ve got to

teach kids how to talk to people, behavior, manners.”

Harris, who is paid \$217,000 a year, made similar points at the state board of education meeting in February, when Renaissance was put on probation. “We build confidence, character, and citizenship,” he told the board, according to the *Globe*, adding that probation “casts a shadow of doubt” over the school’s work and commitment to its students.

The sorts of skills Harris ticked off are getting more attention in education circles, as some argue that the narrow focus in recent years on testing and academic achievement has ignored other factors that may be as or more important to children’s ultimate success. Writer Paul Tough put a big spotlight on these issues in his 2012 book *How Children Succeed: Grit, Curiosity, and the Hidden Power of Character*. What ultimately matters, writes Tough, is not just a child’s test score but whether we help him or her “develop a very different set of qualities, a list that includes persistence, self-control, curiosity, conscientiousness, grit, and self-confidence.”

Charter schools, including several others in Boston, have embraced the idea of developing those character traits in students (“Content of their character,” *CW*, Winter 2013). And there is research underway to develop ways of

measuring such qualities. Until such measures are more fully developed, however, leaders in the charter school movement come down hard on the idea of lessening any expectations for academic gains.

“The inevitable force of politics is to keep failing schools open and to apply metrics other than academic performance as a reason to keep a school open,” said Greg Richmond, president of the National Association of Charter School Authorizers. “That’s what we warn against, realizing that that is the normal course of how education works. But that’s not how we want charters to work.”

As with so many debates in education or, for that matter, many other policy areas, this does not come down to an either-or proposition. Children will need strong academic skills as well as other non-cognitive strengths to navigate their way in an increasingly complicated, knowledge-based economy.

At the Renaissance school, which has had to pick itself up more than once, that presents school leaders and teachers with a character challenge of their own. While providing a rich curriculum of arts, Mandarin, and other offerings, does Renaissance have the persistence and grit to also stay focused on the achievement in core academics that is also crucial to its students’ future success? **CW**

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City maker's mark

Kendall Square's retail revival didn't happen by accident. One big force behind it was Jesse Baerkahn, an avatar of the new urban planning buzzword "placemaking." It's a tricky approach that tries to breathe life into urban areas by celebrating what's unique about them, not by importing bland, suburban mall offerings.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY FRANK CURRAN

JESSE BAERKAHN BELIEVES in cities. He feeds off their energy. And he knows that unique, vibrant, inviting urban spaces don't happen by accident. Quality urban neighborhoods take thought and long hours of work. They need champions whose job it is to steadfastly avoid the quick, easy path.

Baerkahn works in urban placemaking. It's his job to celebrate a strong sense of place in urban neighborhoods, and to eschew formulaic, big boxy sameness. He uses clusters of local retailers to anchor ambitious economic development projects. This takes some work. American cities are enjoying a widespread renaissance. As people and invest-

ment shift away from the suburbs, there's a real danger of crowding out the vitality that underpins the urban comeback. Baerkahn believes that the future of cities depends on actively guarding against the suburbanization of urban spaces, and deepening the things that are driving the urban renaissance in the first place. He's the founder of Graffito SP, a Cambridge- and New York-based consultancy firm whose tagline is "cities + food + arts + people + context + creativity + responsibility (or something like that)." It's the sort of whimsical branding that's typical of such firms, but it also captures some of the challenge Graffito takes on in trying to weave together the complicated web of con-

nections that cities draw on for their vitality.

Graffito SP's work is rooted in real estate, but the firm doesn't do a traditional transaction-based real estate business. Baerkahn is part lawyer, part real estate broker, part urban cheerleader. His main job is acting as a translator between small businesses and landlords and local government, helping them understand how to use food and small-scale retail and the arts to foster economic development. He uses real estate deals as a tool for developing small businesses and fostering urban vitality; he's far less concerned with the fate of individual storefronts than the feel and function of whole neighborhoods.

Baerkahn, a 33-year-old Winchester native, backed into his current work in urban real estate. When he went to Northeastern University's School of Law, his plan was to set up a practice working with small owner-operated businesses. His big break appeared as an attempt to subsidize his fledgling law practice. In 2007, the real estate developer Alex Twining had just built the first new large-scale residential complex in Cambridge's Kendall Square in ages, and he wanted Baerkahn to help market it to young, MBTA-bound residents. Along the way, Twining tapped Baerkahn to help fill the building's first-floor retail space—space no traditional retailer would touch.

"The key was, it couldn't just be one storefront," Baerkahn says. "You had to change the neighborhood." So after plugging a pair of locally-owned restaurants into Twining's space, Baerkahn worked to turn around Kendall Square's reputation as a suburban office park that existed within the city limits, and went dark after 5 pm. The area cried out for some life. Everyone with a stake in the neighborhood—Cambridge residents and city officials, companies renting space in the square and their landlords—wanted to turn Kendall into a vibrant neighborhood. But none of them knew how to put the pieces together.

Baerkahn worked with Kendall's business interests on a coordinated retail campaign, plugging small, locally-operated businesses into the area's empty storefronts. He placed a heavy emphasis on food, and on basic amenities like dry cleaners and day care centers. An influx of chef-centric restaurants has brought Kendall's techy vibe out of the office towers and onto the street, and turned the neighborhood into a culinary destination. The retail placemaking project has also been a strong value proposition for Kendall's landlords; they've subsidized their ground-floor retail and more than make back the retail subsidy on their upper floors, from companies crowding into the suddenly-hip neighborhood.

Beyond Kendall, Baerkahn has worked throughout Cambridge, Boston, and New York. He envisions his new venture, Graffito, as a consulting shop that's also capable of investing directly in real estate development projects. He now splits his time between Brooklyn and Cambridge.

I spoke with Baerkahn at the next phase of Kendall's placemaking project—a restaurant and urban market dubbed Commonwealth. The restaurant and market marks a homecoming of sorts for Baerkahn: It's taking shape at the base of Alex Twining's new residential tower, just in back of the building that brought Baerkahn to Kendall Square six years ago. What follows is an edited transcript of our conversation.

—PAUL MCMORROW

COMMONWEALTH: How would you describe your job? What is it you do?

BAERKAHN: I work on exciting urban projects, transformative, urban placemaking projects. Transformative sounds like a big word. Maybe impactful? I've spent a lot of time writing, researching, and doing legal work from the tenant perspective, and I've spent the last five years primarily focused on the landlord perspective. The idea is to combine those two. The core thing I'm doing is acting as a translator between these small, local owner-operators and these large institutional landlords, to the extent they want to try to do business together in an urban setting.

CW: Explain what placemaking means to you.

BAERKAHN: I think placemaking is about activity. It's about context. It's about energy. In the urban setting, it's about how to make a lot of very different uses synergistic where they meet. It's about making these connection points interesting. There's an element of making things different. To make an interesting place, it has to be different than other places.


Baerkahn, a Winchester native, is part lawyer, part real estate broker, part urban cheerleader.

CW: How so?

BAERKAHN: Great places are specific to the unique context. So a great place in Kendall Square is unique from Harvard Square, because of the circumstances of that specific place. Even though it's in the same town, two Red Line stops away, it looks different, feels different, functions different.

CW: It's the opposite of the geography of nowhere.

BAERKAHN: My concern about retail development over



Jesse Baerkahn inside Commonwealth, a restaurant and urban market under construction in Kendall Square.

this past three decades, and certainly since the '90s, is it looks the same everywhere you put it. Increasingly, as larger institutional developers start refocusing in urban areas, and as people come back to the cities, the real threat is that we bring this formula that has worked in the 'burbs into the city. I honestly think that's a threat. Regardless of what happens on the ground floor, cities are going to function differently than suburbs. The retail should actually be in a different form than in a suburban setting.

CW: The retail is key here, right? That's the argument, that the retail needs special attention, because the activity isn't happening on the 12th floor, it's happening where the building meets the street?

BAERKAHN: Exactly. The other thing is, in a really dynamic urban neighborhood like Kendall Square, to the extent something interesting is happening upstairs, how do you take some of that energy and put it on the ground floor? That's the identity question.

CW: We're sitting in a half-built restaurant here. Amazon and Google and MIT are across the street. Tell me how this place taps into the flavor of Kendall.

BAERKAHN: This space is unique for a bunch of different reasons. One, this deal was done with a chef-owner [Steve "Nookie" Postal] who lives in Cambridge, who has three kids who will be in Cambridge schools, and is invested in this community in a way I can't imagine any other entrepreneur would be, both physically and emotionally. I think that's important. We're sitting in what will be a green urban market. I know when Nookie first thought about opening a restaurant in Cambridge, opening a market certainly wasn't on his radar. This market came together because the landlord, the neighborhood, and the city said, we need this in this neighborhood. We have residential, we have office, there's no place to buy eggs. Nookie was willing to tweak his business model. Nobody's been able to get a fresh head of lettuce in Kendall Square in forever. Now it'll be here. That decision was driven by the demands of the specific neighborhood, and there's no way any formulaic business, any multi-unit chain, would have taken a market seriously. It doesn't fit within their cookie cutter.

CW: You're talking about involving government, neighborhood groups, civic forces in a deal that's typically a transaction between a landlord and a tenant. It's a totally different model.



Baerkahn's latest project is in the base of Alex Twining's new residential tower in Kendall Square.

BAERKAHN: A lot of the landlords in Kendall have bought into the argument that it shouldn't be about one specific deal between a landlord and a tenant. How does the space fit within the larger context of the neighborhood? There have to be conversations with the community—the people who are living here, the people who are working here. The city of Cambridge has been a real advocate to help us understand what the public wants. There's a likelihood of success when you've already gone to the neighborhood and the city and said: What do you want?

CW: Is there also a market research component there? You're telling a landlord, this is where the demand is.

BAERKAHN: For obvious reasons, a lot of these landlords are not here 24 hours a day. These landlords have to rely on all the data that exists in the communities that have been here for decades, and, in that way, the East Cambridge community has been super helpful in telling me, and these landlords, what the neighborhood wants. And they're usually right about what the neighborhood needs. And they're the ones who are going to support it. Also, there is this unique role of restaurants. There's an element of how does it work for people who live in Kendall Square? But it's also a question of how do you draw new people to the neighborhood to create a dynamic place? In the urban setting, the most successful retail is not all

about the density that lives and works there, it is about drawing other people in.

CW: Let's talk about what Kendall looked like when you got here, what the objectives were, and how the place looks and functions now, compared to before.

BAERKAHN: There was really very little that was unique on the ground floor. There was very little that was interesting enough to draw in people from outside Kendall Square. We spent the first six months not marketing any specific space, just marketing the neighborhood. It was helping businesses understand we're next to MIT, on the Red Line, on the river. Those three things alone are huge. Then you layer in all this office space, this residential. We had to create activity on the ground floor that was unique, interesting, attractive to folks who lived and worked here, but also interesting enough that somebody who doesn't live or work here would come over. Once you start getting people who don't live and work to visit, that's when I think placemaking starts to kick in to another level. I'm not traveling from suburb X to suburb Y because they've got a better strip mall. Because I can get the same damn thing in my own town. But I am coming from Allston or Harvard or the 'burbs to Kendall now.

CW: What were those initial conversations like? Kendall had this reputation for years as a suburban office park that happened to be in the city.

BAERKAHN: At first it was a lot of cajoling and dragging. People didn't know where it was! I would go to these restaurateurs who had businesses within two miles. I showed them the map and they couldn't point to where Kendall was. I talked about why this was a really unique neighborhood, why I believed in it, why some of the biggest institutional real estate investors in the country were making investments in Kendall Square. It's the same reason that some of the great chef-centric restaurants and retailers should've been looking at Kendall Square. The second conversation was usually, after they'd said they'd drive through, they'd call and say, well, there's nothing there. And that's the point, right? They'd drive down Third Street, or they'd try to find their way to Ames Street, and they'd say, I didn't see any neighborhood there. So that was challenging.

CW: How long did it take for this project to gain a critical mass? How many places had to open?

BAERKAHN: The first deal was huge. That was the first hurdle, for somebody who had respect within the small business community to come in and invest in Kendall Square.

And then to gain traction, in truth, it was the Area Four deal, up in Tech Square. It was this no-man's land for a really long time, and then you had this critically acclaimed, really dynamic chef who said, we're going to Technology Square, across the street from a vacant warehouse and a research facility. People started to notice. The landlords realized they had put their money where their mouth was. People took me seriously because I could say, look, these landlords believe in this, they know it's going to take some time, but they're willing to invest and structure deals that are really sensitive to your business, especially in the first couple years.

CW: The other part of this was, what the landlords were doing before wasn't working for them, or for the neighborhood, correct?

BAERKAHN: They knew they had to do the right thing on the ground floor, they knew it was the right investment, but some of them didn't know how to do it. It goes back to the translation piece. We know what the city wants, we know what the landlords want, we know what the neighborhood wants, but how do we actually execute? A 1,200-square-foot coffee shop with a local entrepreneur is a harder deal to get done than any big box retail deal in the country. It was just about helping these landlords figure out how to do it.

CW: And now, they see the return, there's more demand on the office space, better office space pricing that makes up the investment below.


BAERKAHN: Why is Biogen moving from the 'burbs back to Kendall Square? They want to be in an interesting neighborhood. All things being equal, if an employer can offer a similar job in a much cooler place, everyone's going to that cooler place.

CW: That's what's fundamentally underpinning this whole urban renaissance to begin with: All things equal, the quality of the space you're in matters.


BAERKAHN: If you ask somebody where their favorite place is, everyone can say, Oh, I love these five places. If you ask them why, they talk a lot about how it felt to be in those places. As opposed to exactly what's in those places. The connection is, they're active, interesting, unique places.

CW: The implication is active, interesting, unique places don't just happen, they need thought.

BAERKAHN: Most unique urban places in the globe, frankly, have developed very organically. Central Square [in Cam-



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CONVERSATION

bridge] is quite interesting and quite attractive for a lot of folks. There was no master plan there. The question is, how, in a relatively short amount of time, can you find a way to create a unique experience that's really attractive from a place perspective, when you don't have many decades to just let things roll? That's the answer Graffito SP is trying to figure out. I haven't figured it out. Everybody talks about Chelsea Market in New York, and they just want that. Well, Chelsea Market took decades to develop into what it is today. Now it's highly profitable, Google's in the building. It wasn't always like that.

CW: And even Kendall, which has been relatively quick, took how many years?

BAERKAHN: I dug into Kendall six years ago. And we have a long way to go. A really long way to go. We're just starting to get traction now. More specialty shops are interested, which was certainly not the case two years ago or five years ago. It's never going to be an amenity shopping district, but we have the chance to bring in things that aren't just restaurants.

CW: Let's talk about the Seaport in Boston a little bit. You worry the Seaport could be a suburban-feeling place in the city, which would be a lost opportunity?

BAERKAHN: Physically, it's exceptionally unique because of its positioning to the city and the water. If you dump a retail district in there that's no different than a retail district in the suburbs, if it's the same as something in Jacksonville and Dallas just sitting there in Boston, I would consider that a failure. The built form of the Seaport should be unique to the Seaport. I think the Fort Point Channel is really interesting. People are drawn there because it's unique, both physically and in terms of what's on the ground floor. The question is, can you get something that's uniquely Seaport? And my concern would be, you get something there that actually has nothing to do with the Seaport, or the neighborhood, and has everything to do with a prescriptive model of what a retail district should look like in modern America.

CW: Because those types of deals are easier for landlords, and the model you put into place here takes more thought, more effort, it happens more slowly. And requires different thinking on the financing end, right?

BAERKAHN: These type of deals take a long time. One of the challenges of growing a business solely working as a broker to get these deals done is it isn't necessarily scalable or profitable, because of the effort that goes into getting some of these deals done.

CW: So in terms of the incentives on the broker side, the landlord side, everything's stacked against doing the right thing. And you're trying to build a business out of going the opposite way.

BAERKAHN: We're asking, what's the right use? What's the most interesting thing we can do? And then let's go after that. Oftentimes, the best thing for the neighborhood from a retail development perspective is certainly not the easiest. Brokers aren't incentivized to do the hardest thing. It's exactly the opposite. That's why a lot of great urban places are typically done by ownership. Ownership has different incentives. If you're able to say, let's make the ground floor really special and really unique because I can justify charging an extra \$5 per square foot on floors two through fifteen, all of a sudden you've solved your economic riddle. It's harder to do with a one-story retail building. That's a riddle I'm working on.

CW: You work mainly in Cambridge and Boston and New York. How does your work scale to a neighborhood like Dudley Square in Roxbury, or to cities like Lowell or Holyoke? The densities are different, the economics of build-

Lowell will never
have Boston's density,
but it could be a really
interesting place.

ing revenues are different, but the end game is the same. They're trying to build locally focused, interesting places.

BAERKAHN: In some ways, the economics are an advantage. Landowners' costs are lower, so they could potentially take more risk. The dirt just doesn't cost as much. The buildings don't cost as much.

CW: If you look at downtown Lowell, downtown Haverhill, in terms of the physical proximity, the scale of the residential development, the importance of the street and the sidewalk, they're built like a lot of neighborhoods in Boston. Is there any reason someone up there couldn't do what you do?

BAERKAHN: The challenge would be having examples showing it can work. It's not going to be exactly like Kendall, but you can do it. If you go to Chicago, it is super spread-out, and there are some really, really interesting retail in places that have very little vertical density. They're often connected to public transit, and they often start with

these little clusters of retail goodness that get bigger and bigger. Restaurateurs fundamentally want to be around other restaurateurs. It's not a unique urban phenomenon. In an area like Dudley, it's almost harder when you're in a city and you're so close to an urban core that's sucking all the money and power away from areas that are close. It takes a unique entrepreneur. You see it happening on 125th Street in Harlem. You're getting some really interesting, unique retail, mixed in with retail that has been there forever. In Dudley, it's just about trying to bring more amenities to the neighborhood, to keep people in that neighborhood, keep dollars in that neighborhood. That dollar spent in a local business goes so much further than a dollar spent in a Subway [restaurant] or whatever it is.

CW: You've also seen strong retail not only retain the residential presence, but give it forward momentum.

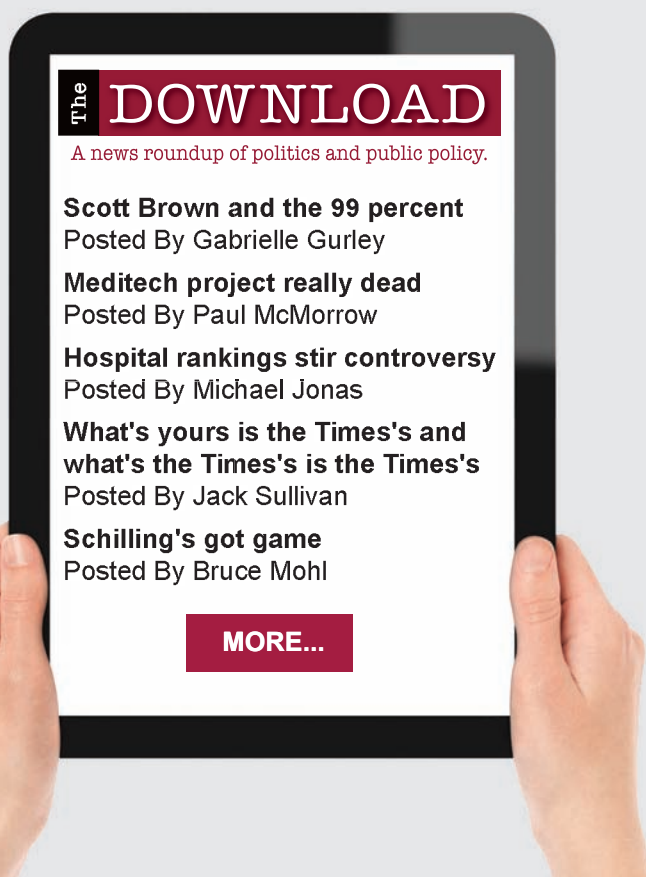
BAERKAHN: Look at some of these areas in Brooklyn. Ask people why they're moving to neighborhoods that, 10 years ago, may not have had any residential population, literally vacant warehouse neighborhoods. They're going for two reasons. One, because there are interesting things there, typically restaurants. And two, because there are other interesting people there. These neighborhoods are happening. Instead of going into neighborhoods and bringing new people into neighborhoods that already have a different kind of residential density, I'm more interested in going into neighborhoods that have no density and figuring out how do you create value in a neighborhood that doesn't have any? We're going to have to create new neighborhoods as people come into the urban core. The better approach is redeveloping land that's not being used for anything, as opposed to pushing people out, which we see happen a lot. That's a tough balance. But in Kendall, there wasn't much, and that's what's interesting about the Seaport.

CW: A lot of the development that's happening in places like Lowell, Lawrence, Haverhill, it's repurposing empty factories.

BAERKAHN: Our generation may be more inclined, if there's interesting retail and amenities, to go live in a place like Lowell than to live in a place like Burlington. They're not that far apart. Would you rather live in Andover or Lowell? I don't think Lowell is that far from being able to draw some of the folks currently living in the urban core, when they eventually want to get out of downtown Boston or Cambridge, but they still want to be in a dynamic mixed-use neighborhood. Do they stay in the city? Or do they go to, not suburban, but sub-urban? Lowell will never have the density of Boston, but it could be a really interesting mixed-use place that Burlington or Andover won't be. **CW**

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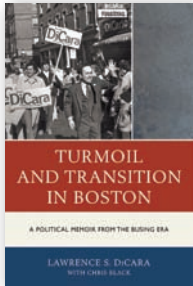
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Boston's oracle

As both practitioner and interpreter, Larry DiCara has spent a lifetime steeped in Boston politics. That makes his memoir a true tale of the city.



**Turmoil and Transition in Boston:
A Political Memoir from the Busing Era**
By Lawrence S. DiCara, with Chris Black
Lantham, Hamilton Books
234 pages

REVIEWED BY MICHAEL JONAS

Turmoil and Transition in Boston, the title of Larry DiCara's memoir, is an apt heading for his chronicle of the city's busing years, which coincide roughly with the 12 years he spent in politics. The turmoil part is clear: The school desegregation order ripped the city apart like nothing before or since. The transition, on the other hand, takes a more skilled hand to convey fully. It was not marked by any single event or issue but by a set of changes set in motion during that time that have remade Boston into a far different city than the one in which DiCara came of age.

There may be no better teller of this tale than DiCara, the dean of all Boston things demographic and electoral. For years, DiCara has been reporters' go-to guy for comment and analysis. He's finally gathered up all those shared nuggets of local lore and historical context—and many more from his diaries—into a highly readable account of one of the most wrenching decades in the life of the city.

A Dorchester-born son of Italian-American strivers, DiCara went from Boston Latin School to Harvard and then, only months after his graduation in 1971, onto the City Council. At age 22, he became the youngest person ever elected to the body.

A policy wonk before the term came into widespread use, DiCara was interested in the workings of city government in a way that immediately set him apart from his council colleagues, an older generation of Boston pols more interested in trading favors and landing jobs for loyal constituents. Any ideas DiCara had about policy and government operations, however, were quickly subordinated to the only thing on anyone's mind: the loom-

ing federal order to desegregate Boston's schools.

When Judge Arthur Garrity's order came down in 1974, it tore at the social fabric of Boston in ways still being felt today. Winthrop's shining city on a hill became a "seething sea of anger, resentment, and violence," writes DiCara. "There was a real fear that the city was unraveling."

DiCara found himself the odd man out on the all-white city council, where he was the only one who didn't sign on with the antibusing organization ROAR and its leader Louise Day Hicks (a fellow city council member). The busing plan was a horrible solution to a very real injustice, he writes, a view that history has in many ways vindicated.

In determining where a child would go to school, mapmakers far removed from the everyday life of the city reduced sections of neighborhoods to "geocodes," and they treated school children like black and white chess pieces to be rearranged on the board until some definition of parity was reached. Some of the city's poorest black and white children were the subjects of this scheme, and the schools in white neighborhoods like Charlestown and South Boston that were integrated were hardly paragons of scholastic wonder.

In speeches, DiCara decried the "polarization" brought on by those "who seek to profit from the divisions among us." But he voices regret bordering on shame at not being a more forceful voice during the crisis. "In general, I kept my head down. I admit I was not a profile in courage," he writes.

Notwithstanding such misgivings, there was little middle ground during the crisis, and, to borrow from Hicks's well-worn antibusing slogan,

people knew where DiCara stood. A simple call for law-abiding tolerance and calm was an act of treason to the antibusing forces. It meant his mother got berated at the supermarket. “Many who had always pitched a DiCara sign on their front lawn refused to take my sign for this campaign,” he writes of the 1975 election. “Others, including longtime friends and neighbors, just flatly told me to my face that they could no longer vote for me.” One longtime supporter “never spoke to me again.”

This was an era of ill will, much of it better recalled than relived. There was plenty of debate and public engagement, but little of it evoked a high-minded sense of the democratic experience. “Many of the elected ‘leaders’ of Boston pandered to the lowest common denominator,” writes DiCara.

The turmoil has come to be the defining image of the era. What gets lost are the enormous changes that the period also birthed, transitions that seeded the far more cosmopolitan Boston of today. With its polyglot precincts and more vibrant street life, undergirded by a knowledge economy positioned perfectly for the 21st century, the city is thriving. In many ways, Boston has been engaged in a 40-year battle to have this picture replace the one of big-city bigotry that was so deeply burned into the national consciousness.

DiCara is equally insightful here. The change that was underway had several components. It included a tremendous population churn, with the arrival of more immigrants, a growing gay population, and a burgeoning band of younger, better-educated professionals who started migrating outward from downtown neighborhoods to the South End and Charlestown, then to Jamaica Plain, South Boston, and Dorchester. He points out that the transition to a much more tolerant city was also fueled by the exodus of those who could least abide the changing racial landscape.

Meanwhile, Boston’s longstanding strengths in higher education and medicine, and leading role in the emerging high-tech and finance sectors, gave the region the perfect mix to soar in a global economy that was rewarding brains over brawn. DiCara acknowledges the toll this has also taken. In Jamaica Plain, where he now lives, “the delta between the haves and have-nots has increased quite dramatically in recent years,” he laments.

Where DiCara fills out this story well is in showing how public sector decision-making was critical to this urban renaissance. He had a hand in the city’s decision to allow a then-novel remake of Faneuil Hall and the derelict Quincy Market buildings. He recounts the battle to halt the Southwest Expressway slated to cut through Jamaica Plain and Roxbury. The new Orange Line corridor of transit lines and parkland won out instead, accompanied by a blossoming of the surrounding neighborhoods that would never have

occurred alongside an interstate highway. The Big Dig, the Silver Line to the waterfront, the Charlestown Navy Yard, and Post Office Square park are just some of the public infrastructure or private development projects he points to that got their start during this time and which have utterly transformed the city.

DiCara, now a downtown real estate lawyer, has been out of office for more than 30 years, but he’s never left the civic stage, serving on countless nonprofit boards and retaining an energetic level of engagement with the city.

For him, the last hurrah in politics came in 1983, when DiCara was one of nine candidates in the preliminary election to succeed Kevin White as mayor. It was the

You would make a great mayor, Flynn told him.

office he had longed for from the start. He finished far out of the money in fourth place, as Ray Flynn and Mel King advanced to the final. Here is the one place where I think his account briefly falters. “Ray Flynn managed to emerge as the choice of the blue collar conservatives still in the city, just as Mel King became a rallying point for the growing numbers of minority group members. It was enough,” he writes.

Though it’s hard to see today from his return to his hard-right roots, Flynn fashioned a winning coalition that was much broader than blue collar conservatives. Indeed, he also scooped up plenty of left-leaning community activists and policy-oriented housing leaders who, by rational reckoning, could easily have been backers of the issue-driven young liberal councilor from Dorchester.

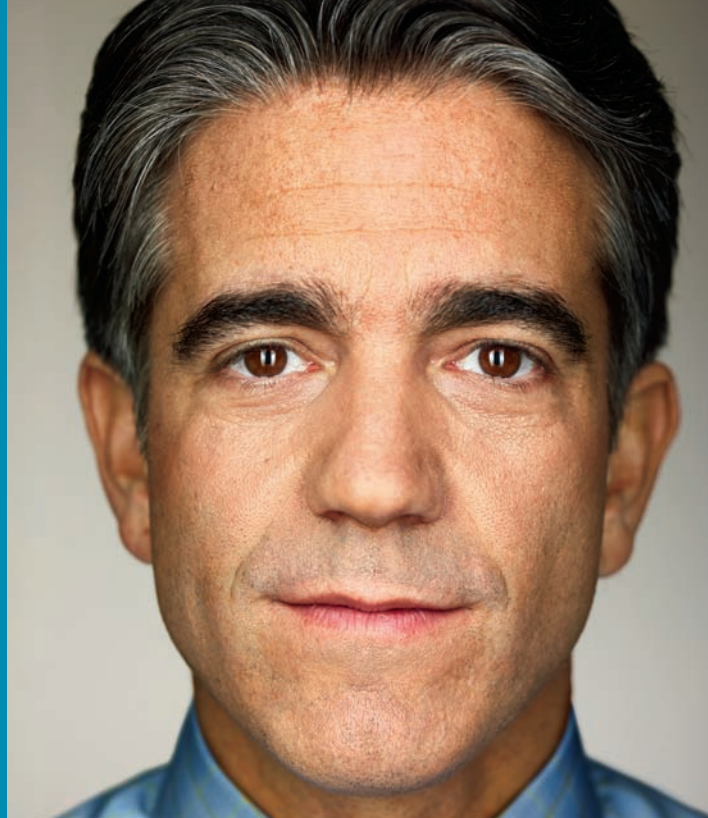
That Flynn brought them into his fold may look all the more ironic in light of one moment DiCara shares from a 1983 candidate forum on housing issues. He writes that Flynn leaned to him at one point and said, “You know more about this stuff than anybody else. You would probably make a great mayor, but I don’t think anybody’s going to vote for you.”

Alas, DiCara has become Boston’s own Adlai Stevenson. As a well-known story goes, during his 1956 presidential campaign, a woman called out to the Democratic nominee, “Senator, you have the vote of every thinking person!” Stevenson shot back, “That’s not enough, madam. I need a majority!”

When the *Globe’s* Larry Harmon wrote a column recently about DiCara’s book, it was headlined, “The best mayor we didn’t elect.” That may be small consolation to a man who admits he still pines for the job. But it’s a high tribute nonetheless, and one that DiCara only seems more worthy of after reading his honest account of a time of great ferment in the city he so clearly loves. **CW**

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