

UMass Dartmouth Academic Resource Center awarded \$2.35M grant

The highly competitive grant helps provide support services to students pursuing business and STEM studies.

UMass Dartmouth's Academic Resource Center (ARC) has received a \$2.35 million TRiO grant to help provide support services to students who meet certain criteria, including students enrolled in business courses and STEM-specific programs and eligible students who are Pell Grant recipients. The five-year grant will help provide support services to students of underrepresented populations as well as students who identify as first-generation, low-income, or disabled.

"The Academic Resource Center strives to provide excellent tutorial and academic support services, including academic counseling, advising, and tutoring, to students enrolled at UMass Dartmouth," says Carol Spencer-Monteiro, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Success.

The ARC is one of three student-centric programs among 22 that received funding in Massachusetts and attained a perfect score in the current grant competition. Last academic year, the Center – through its Outreach Counselor services and STEM Learning Lab as well as the Writing & Reading Center – received nearly 8,000 visits and supported more than 1,400 students. Nearly 70 percent of those students were Asian, Black, or Hispanic or students of other underrepresented populations.

John Fernandes, director of the STEM Learning Lab, says "In addition to helping students in their classes, tutors often improve their GPAs through their constant review of course materials, thus helping them to maintain a firm understanding

of the foundation material necessary to succeed in all their upper-level courses and prepare for graduate studies and employment.” Financially, students also benefit through the ARC’s Grant Aid Award, a \$900 Pell supplement awarded to 60 students every year.

Since 1975, the ARC has successfully garnered funding for TRIO Student Support Services, making it the sixth-largest grant UMass Dartmouth has received to enhance students’ academic success. This five-year grant from the Federal Department of Education for the Student Support Services Program helps students to succeed and increase retention, persistence, graduate rates, employment, and/or enrollment in graduate studies. The University also supplies funds to the ARC for tutorial support for business and STEM students.