

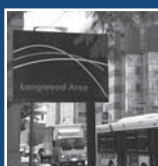
# ON THE ROAD

Stories,  
Pages 4-5

## Cohen announces transportation improvements in Longwood area

**Massachusetts Secretary of Transportation Bernard Cohen**, right, announced plans to invest nearly \$40 million in traffic management, roadway and MBTA improvements in the Longwood Medical and Academic Area at MASCO's annual meeting.

See **TRANSPORTATION** Page 10



**By way of introduction, I am a bright ninth-grade student in the Gateway Program... I am writing to express my gratitude...I always heard this program was a great opportunity and I also believe it is...all of us are committed to making our program the best it can be...**

These phrases are from letters written by students in the O'Bryant School during their summer orientation at the Gateway to the LMA program. They were already learning how to succeed through school years and beyond. However, the gratitude that they express is really that of the LMA community to the school and its students. Partnering with a potential 21 institutions is exciting, but far from easy. We appreciate the dedication and skill of Principal Joel Stembridge, program director Jennifer Wu and the Gateway teachers to relate to all of us, while we fulfill personal values and institutional commitments to our surrounding neighborhoods and their

young people. We all look forward to the outcomes of this program, where we can follow students as they grow, learn, mature, matriculate, and come back as leaders in their communities.

As we encourage people to gain education and skills to access jobs in the LMA, we also continue to pursue projects that help people get here. On pages 4 and 5, we celebrate those choosing bicycling as a commuter option; we describe the intersections where MASCO worked with the Boston Transportation Department to improve traffic signals and lessen congestion; and we picture the new directional signs on which all of the institutions collaborated

to help commuters navigate through Longwood.

The Board of Directors of MASCO was elected at our annual meeting to help MASCO navigate its way. The new list is on page 10. Following MASCO's by-laws, the Chief Executive Officer of each member institution is a board member. A second Board member from each institution is an officer who can commit that institution financially and strategically to MASCO's affairs. Just as with the O'Bryant students, MASCO is fortunate that these institutions and individuals are guiding and mentoring us, as we serve our members through a broad range of plans, programs and projects.

See you all in the New Year. I hope it is a good one for you,

*Marilyn*  
Marilyn Swartz-Lloyd  
President and CEO

**Dr. Zorica Pantic,  
President of the  
Wentworth Institute of  
Technology, and MASCO  
President Marilyn Swartz-  
Lloyd at the Wentworth  
lunch for students  
from the John D.  
O'Bryant School  
Gateway to the  
LMA Program.**





# Gateway to the LMA

## Innovative program begins at the O'Bryant School

This fall, 52 young men and women entered the John D. O'Bryant School in Roxbury with a new focus and new motivation.

The students are part of the O'Bryant Gateway to the LMA program. Gateway offers a unique combination of a four-year college preparatory curriculum and hands-on career explorations in science and math related fields.

The O'Bryant Gateway scholars - 28 girls and 24 boys - will benefit from a rigorous curriculum, intensive academic support and comprehensive career and college guidance. They will also gain integrated, meaningful learning experiences and leadership opportunities with LMA institutions, including tutoring, internships, mentoring and enrichment programs.

"The LMA institutions are providing essential resources for creating bridges between the school, higher education and the real world of medicine and science," said Dr. Jennifer Wu, Director of the O'Bryant Gateway to the LMA.

As examples, Wu has recruited tutors from the Colleges of the Fenway, scientists from Dana-Farber who are volunteering to give research presentations in the classrooms and labs at the Brigham and Women's Hospital that will host group tours. The students will also be taking advantage of college admission workshops offered by Harvard Medical School.

"Ultimately, we hope that many of our students will participate in internships at LMA institutions before they leave high school," she said. "We hope that all of our students develop the fundamental academic skills to succeed in high school, college and graduate school and that



**Left, students and faculty from the Gateway Program that participated in the orientation.**

many become excited by their early exposures to the medical, science and health professions."

The school is also launching the O'Bryant Bio Scholars' Club in association with the Gateway program. Scheduled activities include trips to LMA institutions, student academic competitions and related community-service.

Extended-day programming for all Gateway students began on September 17. A four-day orientation session took place, culminating with a luncheon at the Wentworth Institute of Technology, at the end of August. Gateway spokesperson Dr. Darlene Gabeau-Lacet, one of the first graduates of the pioneer Gateway program in New York, visited with students during the session. Gabeau is a post-doctoral research fellow in radiation oncology and pathology at Massachusetts General Hospital. She is also a third-year resident physician in the Harvard Radiation Oncology program based at Brigham and Women's Hospital. A graduate of Jamaica High School in Queens, NY, Gabeau earned her degrees at Yale University and Wellesley College. She credits the Gateway program for her academic and professional success.

"I worked so hard in the Gateway program that college was easier for me," she told students at the orientation's closing lunch. "Without it, I wouldn't have had the same high school experience. All of my best friends in life are from the Gateway program. They work at hospitals around New England now."

## Extreme Makeover at MassArt and MCPHS



Two college campuses united to beautify their surroundings and create a joint image to be based on the 'art of science.'

Massachusetts College of Art and Design and Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences chose to jointly improve the entryway and landscape at the corner of Longwood Ave and Palace Road. New concrete paths, granite curbs and plantings were installed over the course of three weeks in August, before the students returned. The plan incorporates the newly renovated COF Kiosk, a seating area and bike racks.

MASCO assisted MassArt and MCPHS as project manager, coordinating the work of the landscape architect, landscape contractor and graphic designer. The institutions are working on a design for window graphics to be displayed at the entrance.

## A signal of improvement at Boston intersections

Thanks to \$160,000 in private funding, commuters who come to the LMA from the south via Ruggles Street will have an easier time getting here.

The funds, which came from MASCO's Area Planning and Development budget and a contribution from Merck Research Laboratories Boston, allowed for signal improvements at nine intersections along the Ruggles Street corridor.

The intersection improvements, which included repairing vehicle detection and adjusting timing, have allowed for better coordination between traffic signals.

The results: reduced traffic congestion and increased safety for drivers and pedestrians.

The nine locations affected by the project include Louis Prang Street at Evans Way/Fenway; Huntington Avenue at Ruggles Street/Louis Prang Street; Ruggles Street at Parker Street; Ruggles Street at Leon Street; Tremont Street at Ruggles Street/Access Drive; Tremont Street at Ruggles Street/Whittier Place; Ruggles Street at MBTA Station Bus Drive; Melnea Cass Boulevard at Columbus Avenue; and Melnea Cass Boulevard at Tremont Street. Final improvements are scheduled to be in place by Dec. 1, 2007.

Commuters are already noticing a reduction in delays, as well as in the number of vehicles blocking intersections.

MASCO worked in cooperation with the Boston Transportation Department (BTD) to complete the design and implementation of the project. The BTD is also continuing to implement major Intelligent Transportation System measures. They include the use of a central traffic management computer to provide a higher level of traffic signal coordination from the Traffic Management Center in City Hall.

"MASCO has been a good partner of the Boston Transportation Department in working toward our shared goal of improving travel conditions for pedestrians and commuters along Ruggles Street," said Transportation Commissioner Thomas Tinlin. "This street will see ongoing benefits from the equipment improvements and operational adjustments recommended and implemented by MASCO's contractors. Small changes such as the strategic addition of concurrent walk signals, as well as modification of the timing and phasing of signals, will make the trip for many safer and more efficient."

MASCO has also completed an analysis of six additional intersections on Melnea Cass Boulevard in need of improvement. The documentation will be provided to the BTD who will make future funding and implementation decisions.



## Seeing signs

### New signage leads commuters around the Longwood Area

Visitors to the Longwood Medical and Academic Area have new directional and trail blazer signs leading them into and around the area.

Through a complete upgrade of the existing vehicular sign program, designed to improve the overall accessibility of the LMA, nearly 150 new signs were installed this year.

"It is important to see new signage that clearly identifies the institutional diversity of the Longwood Area, a neighborhood rich with cultural institutions, universities and hospitals," said Anne Hawley, Norma Jean Calderwood director at the Isabella Gardner Museum.

"As a big-scale revival of the existing signs, it's helping in the way-finding process, re-routing people," said Jennifer Nadelson, administrative director of support services at Brigham and Women's Hospital. "The overall look and feel of the signage makes the LMA its own branded destination. It's a really positive change."

The upgrade included 38 directional signs, 78 street name signs and 25 trail blazer signs – placed on major corridors and transit stops to steer people into the LMA. The primary goal of the project was to improve the flow of traffic, reduce congestion and help visitors find the most direct route to their destination.

"One of the best examples of the ways in which these signs work appropriately is coming up from Brookline Village," said David Eppstein, MASCO's vice president of operations. "The signs on Brookline Avenue and on the Jamaica Way direct people who want to go to Wheelock, Emmanuel, Simmons, the Gardner Museum, Temple Israel and the Winsor School to the Fenway and Riverway, rather than through the heart of the LMA on Brookline Ave."

MASCO worked closely with Roll-Barresi and Associates to complete the project, and member institutions contributed \$110,000 towards the cost of fabrication and installation.

Plans are currently underway to upgrade LMA Gateway banners. A new pedestrian sign program is also being developed with an expected installation date of summer/fall 2008.



# BIKE WEEK

## Bicycling gains momentum as viable commuter option

Commuters throughout the Longwood Medical and Academic Area are being urged to trade in their four wheels for two.

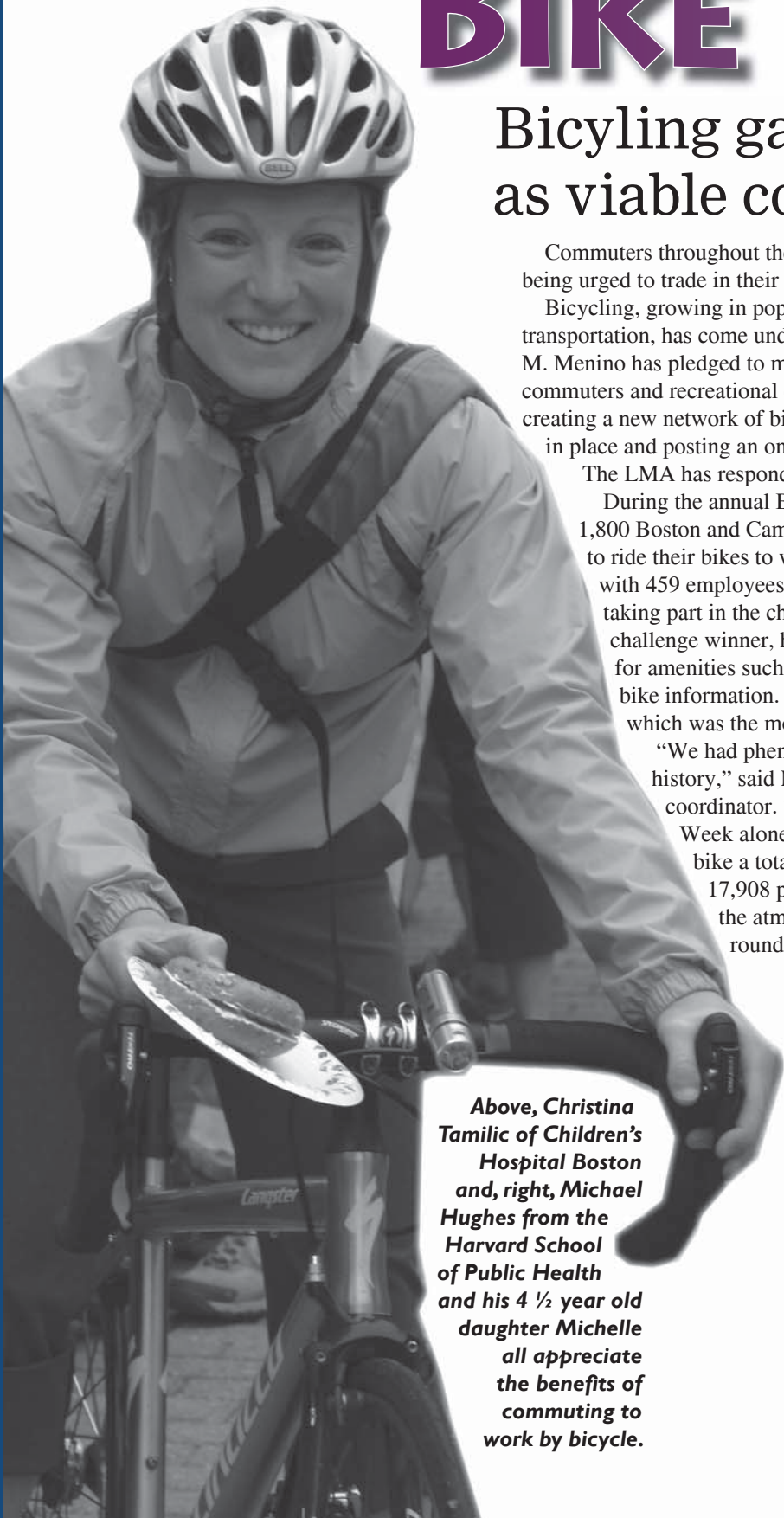
Bicycling, growing in popularity as both a sport and a means of transportation, has come under recent spotlight in Boston. Mayor Thomas M. Menino has pledged to make the city more bike-friendly for both commuters and recreational cyclists during the next several years by creating a new network of bike lanes, putting hundreds of new bike racks in place and posting an online map system.

The LMA has responded with enthusiasm.

During the annual Bike Week Commuter Challenge, more than 1,800 Boston and Cambridge area employees and students pledged to ride their bikes to work or school. The LMA set a new record with 459 employees from 15 MASCO member institutions taking part in the challenge. Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, the challenge winner, had 72 participants and received bonus points for amenities such as shower facilities, onsite bike racks and bike information. Children's Hospital registered 83 employees, which was the most of all LMA institutions.

"We had phenomenal turnout – the best in Longwood history," said Matthew Grymek, CommuteWorks program coordinator. "It was up from last year." During Bike

Week alone, the 459 registered bikers were able to bike a total of 16,280 miles, eliminate approximately 17,908 pounds of CO2 emissions from entering the atmosphere and commute an average of 9.4 roundtrip miles a day.



**Above, Christina Tamilic of Children's Hospital Boston and, right, Michael Hughes from the Harvard School of Public Health and his 4 ½ year old daughter Michelle all appreciate the benefits of commuting to work by bicycle.**





## Wentworth students learn community service as part of orientation

Wentworth Institute of Technology's orientation week for incoming freshman and transfer students, called Wentworth Opening Week – WOW, took place during

the week of August 27-31. The week culminated with a Community Service Day on Friday August 31st. Students visited different locations across the Mission Hill and Fenway neighborhoods, including local elementary schools, recreational spaces operated by the Boston Parks Department, and service agencies such as Sociedad Latina and Community

Servings. At each site students performed different volunteer tasks: serving meals, classroom preparation, raking and cleaning parks and playgrounds.

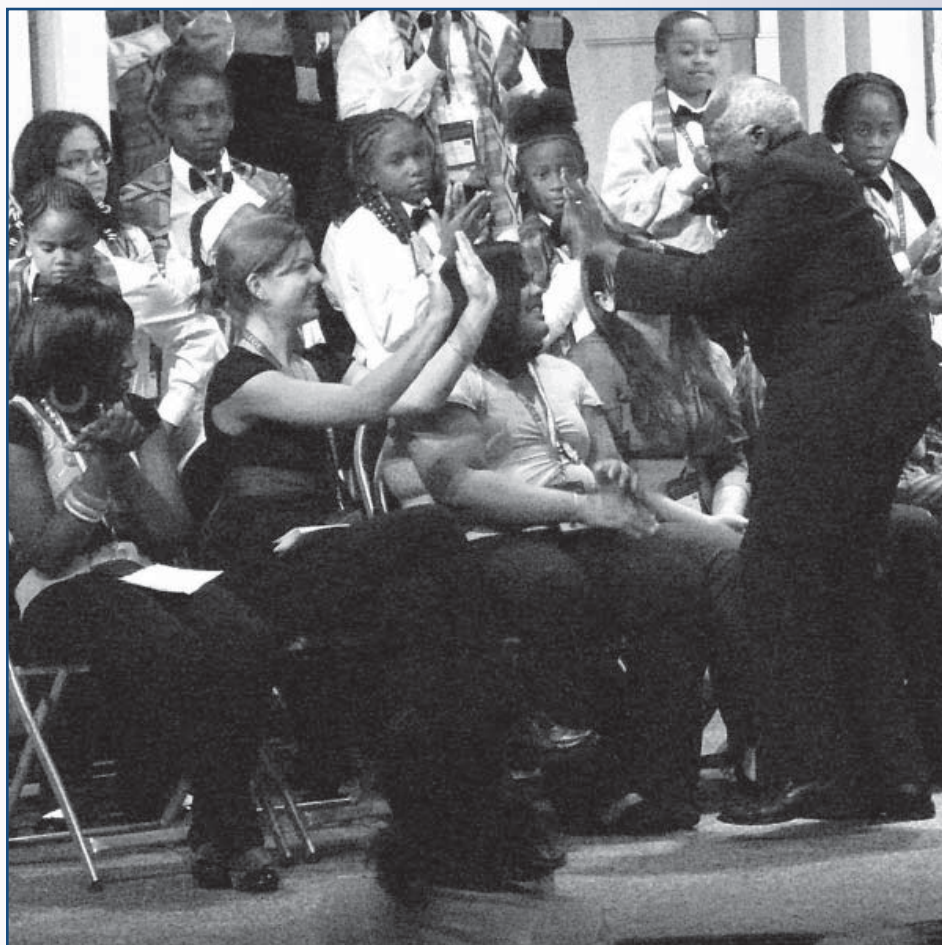
Wentworth received a 'Certificate of Appreciation' from the Boston Parks & Recreation for their "contribution to the Back Bay and Mission Hill neighborhoods."



## Boo! To Bad Health

Beth Israel Deaconess and Children's Hospital Boston are founding members of the Roxbury Alliance for Community Health – a grass-roots collaboration of community residents, hospitals, health centers, non-profit organizations and government agencies. On October 31st, the Alliance sponsored Boo to Bad Health – a safe, healthy alternative Halloween experience at three local health centers. Featured in this photo is Dimock Community Health Center's celebration that included a dental hygiene demonstration, arts and crafts, cookie decorating, and of course, trick or treats! More than 100 children and parents participated in the activities at the three health centers.





**Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Boston Youth Symposium participants greet each other with enthusiasm.**

PHOTO © DON WEST

## Archbishop Tutu at Wheelock College Youth Symposium

Nobel Peace Prize Winner Archbishop Desmond Tutu was the honored guest on October 29th as the keynote speaker for a youth symposium hosted and organized by **Wheelock College**. More than 400 Boston middle and high school students attended "Bridges to Hope and Understanding: Exploring Truth and Reconciliation: A Conversation with Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu and The Youth of Boston."

The aim of the Youth Symposium was to introduce Boston youth to the Archbishop's peaceful reconciliation tactics that have been successful with South African youth. With the recent surge in teen violence in Boston and across the country, finding ways to reduce and prevent the rise in teen violence is at the fore. Archbishop Tutu spoke about the "Truth and Reconciliation" platform he created, in which retribution is not an option. He was joined by Governor Deval Patrick and television personality Liz Walker who served as moderator for the symposium. Wheelock bestowed an honorary Doctorate of Education degree to welcome Archbishop Tutu to the Wheelock community.

## Harvard School of Public Health Community Partnership Day

The **Harvard School of Public Health** sponsored Community Partnership Day on September 17. This event provided an opportunity for members of the LMA community to network with community agencies about internship and volunteer opportunities. The day included a community forum with health care leaders from community agencies and keynote addresses focused on health care reform and equity. Speakers included Nancy Turnbull, MBA, Senior Lecturer on Health Policy in the Department of Health Policy and Management at the school, and John E. McDonough, DrPH, the executive Director of Health Care for All, as well as an Adjunct Lecturer on Health Policy and Management at HSPH. In the afternoon an Agency Information Fair provided a place for visitors to meet with community agencies.

## Free Brown Bag Lunchtime Series

In October and November the Medical Area Federal Credit Union (MAFCU) offered another series of lunchtime seminars focusing on useful financial topics. This series provided information on:

- **Mortgage 101:**  
What You Need to Know About Financing or Refinancing Your Home
- **Understanding Money and Credit**
- **Preventing Identity Theft**



The series was held in the MASCO Building at 375 Longwood Avenue. For information on future sessions contact Paula Kerwin at [pgkerwin@partners.org](mailto:pgkerwin@partners.org), or call 617-525-6782.

# Harvard.edu secures its future

Email addresses that end with “harvard.edu” in the Longwood Medical Area have more than a web address in common. In fact, the Longwood Medical Area Network (LMANet) serves the LMA as an extension of the Harvard University network. LMANet not only secures communication on patient care, research, and education, but also acts as a private network for the community.

When LMANet was formed in 1988, it was determined that a neutral entity would administer and take ownership of it on behalf of the institutions in the Longwood Medical Area. Thus, it is owned by MASCO Services, under the direction of member participation in Executive and Technical Committees, and is managed by Harvard University Information Systems.

Due to its growth, the LMANet Executive Committee and MASCO Services recently engaged in a network upgrade that secured both the present and the future for the Longwood area network connection. **John Powers, left, Chair of the LMANet Board of Directors and Chief Administrative Information Officer at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center,** explained how LMANet works by comparing the volume and flow of internet

use to something everyone in the LMA can relate to: congested traffic.

“Imagine that the internet connection running from each Longwood Institution is a county road and that those tributaries join at the LMA network hub. The connection from LMANet to Harvard could be compared to a state highway. Moreover, the connection from the Harvard network to cyberspace is an interstate highway,” Powers said.

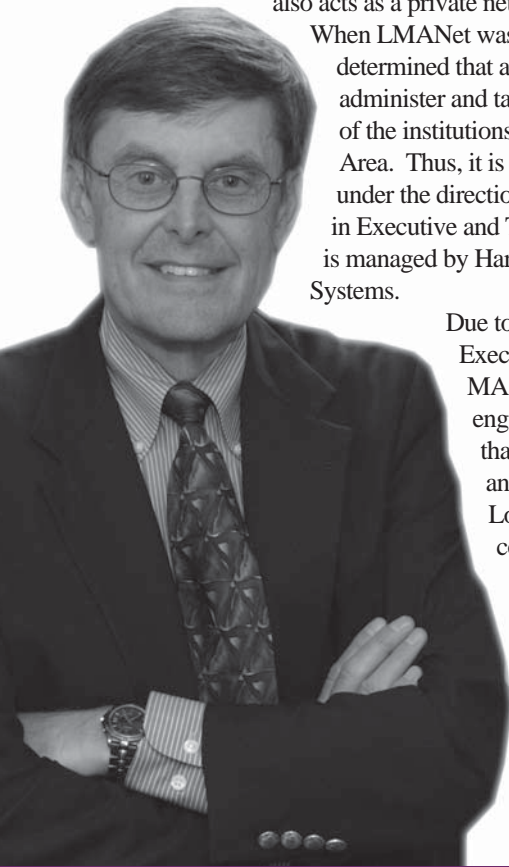
The upgrade increased the network bandwidth, or widened the road for more internet traffic flow, and added a second connection hub to lessen the impact of a network failure. “Securing the LMANet connection provides assurance that there will not be a capacity problem as the institutions continue to grow their services and employees,” Powers commented. Before the upgrade, LMANet connected to the Harvard core network from a single hub at the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute. Adding a second connection point at Harvard Medical School gives LMANet an alternate route to reach the Harvard core.

## A Private LMA Network Cuts Costs

As a private network that runs through the Harvard Network, LMANet cuts costs for LMA institutions. As a private optical Ethernet ring, Harvard leases the fibers for their network. In so doing, they are able to increase the bandwidth without dramatically increasing the costs for the LMA member institutions. This means that LMA institutions can pay for the amount of bandwidth LMANet subscribes to, specific to the community needs.

## Links to Worldwide Research Institutions

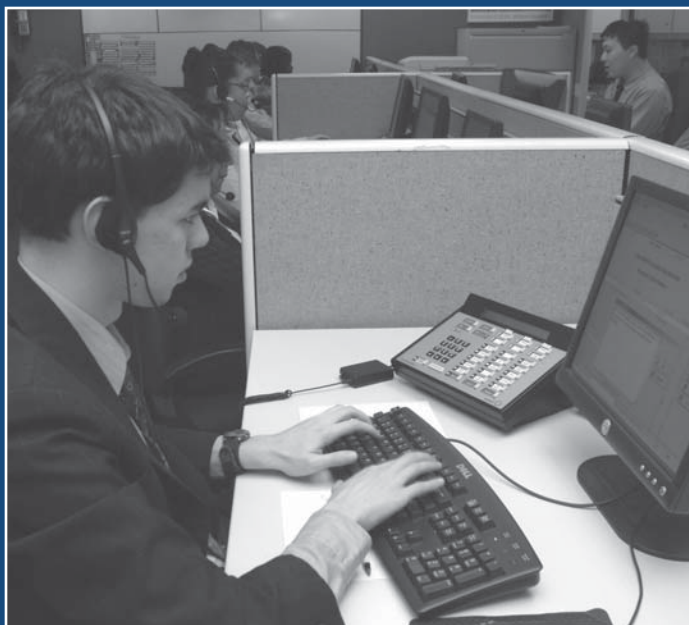
LMA medical, academic, and scientific organizations are linked to the Internet II through LMANet. Internet II is a connection created specifically for the purpose of linking scientific and research institutions around the world. As the global link to the scientific and research community, Internet II is an important resource that the Harvard core network provides the LMA.



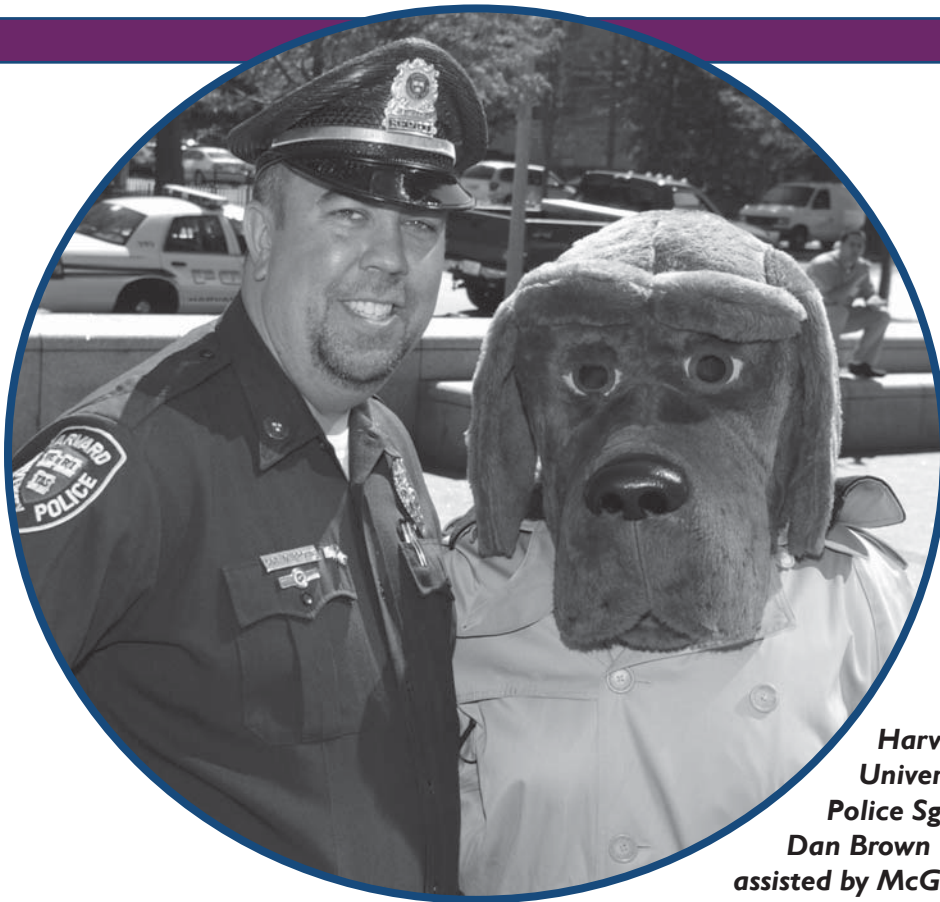
## Award of Excellence

MASCO's Customer Care Call Center has been honored with the 2007 Award of Excellence, presented annually by the Association of TeleServices International (ATSI). This is the fourth year in a row the call center has attained this quality award.

ATSI, the industry's trade association for providers of telecommunications and call center services, rated the Call Center over a six-month period for courtesy, response time, accuracy and overall direct client service. In June, ATSI recognized MSI for its proven quality service to customers at its annual convention in Denver, Colorado.







**Harvard  
University  
Police Sgt.  
Dan Brown  
assisted by McGruff,  
the Crime Dog.**

# Safety first

The LMA Security and Safety Fair was held September 20 on the grounds of The New Research Building at Harvard Medical School. Law enforcement and security professionals, as well as McGruff the Crime Dog, were on hand to answer questions regarding personal safety and property protection.

Funded by the Longwood Medical and Academic Committee on Security, the fair was designed as a forum for information-gathering on topics ranging from self-defense to security in the electronic world. Guests also enjoyed food and gift items.



**Trevor Gooden, Day Security  
Manager at Dana Farber Cancer  
Institute, answers questions at the  
security fair.**

## MASCO helps members book the perfect getaway

If palm trees and white sands sound more enticing than Boston's lingering cold and snow, Cruise and Vacation Perks has made it easy for MASCO member employees to book their perfect getaway.

Through MASCO Services, Inc., member institutions have direct access to a custom web site with the lowest available fares on cruise lines, escorted tours and more than 300 resort properties throughout the Caribbean, Hawaii, Mexico and Florida.

Employees can book online, request quotes or speak directly to an agent. The program also offers a four-percent vacation reward and special monthly bonus offers. Members can extend rewards to friends and family. Cruise and Vacation Perks also offers group travel benefits and two exclusive group trips reserved for MASCO members. The first is a cruise out of Miami on January 5 stopping in the Bahamas, St. Thomas and Puerto Rico. The second trip is a cruise leaving Boston on August 9 stopping in Portland, Maine, Bar Harbor, Maine, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.

To take advantage of the offerings, members can visit [www.cruiseandvacationperks.com/masco92](http://www.cruiseandvacationperks.com/masco92) or call (866)633-6192.

# Transportation improvements

TRANSPORTATION: from Page 1

Cohen described the Patrick administration's plans to invest over \$35 million in traffic management, public transit, and roadway improvements in the Longwood, Fenway, Kenmore area. These funds represent a large portion of the \$55 million voted by the legislature for the area in the State's Economic Stimulus Bill.

Cohen, the guest speaker at MASCO's 2007 annual meeting, outlined initiatives including \$12 million to make Yawkey Station a full-service commuter rail station; \$5 million for improvements to the D line at the MBTA's Fenway and Longwood stations; \$5.6 million for traffic management improvements in the City of Boston; and \$12.5 million for improvements to area roadways and pedestrian walkways.

## City and State planning with community review

Both City and State will oversee planning of the projects with community review and input. As part of the package, the BRA is currently undertaking a traffic improvement study in the Longwood and Fenway area with \$400,000, and an additional \$500,000 would be used for study and preliminary design of a multi-modal commuter rail and bus station with a parking facility in North Allston. The funds will be designated to the public agencies responsible for implementation.

The Secretary's department is also reviewing phase two of the Urban Ring project to improve circumferential transit service in Boston, addressing the need for connections to the radial public transportation system. A State project team is studying alternative routes, along with a Citizen Advisory Committee, to tie the system together. In Longwood, three alternatives consist exclusively of surface bus routes. MASCO, with the help of Representative Capuano's office, has helped the department obtain federal funding to study a fourth option, a tunnel between Ruggles and the Park Drive/Kenmore area.

## Transportation planning hampered by aging infrastructure and large system deficit

Cohen also warned that transportation planning in Boston and the Commonwealth is hampered by an aging infrastructure. Approximately 500 bridges in the State are in poor condition, and 30% of its highways are in fair to poor condition. In addition, there is a backlog of \$500 million in the funding of already approved transportation projects. He stated that the State faces a \$16 to 19 billion deficit simply to maintain current levels of operations in its transportation network over the next 20 years. He said that there is a need for Massachusetts, like other states, to earmark additional resources dedicated to maintenance and further growth of the state's transportation systems. A number of public and private groups in the Commonwealth are working on opportunities to modify the transportation funding structure.

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(as elected at the Annual Meeting June 2007)

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## FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2007

MASCO posted another year of strong financial performance ending the year with an increase of unrestricted net assets of \$3.35 million.

**Revenues:** Revenues increased by approximately \$2 million over FY2006. MASCO experienced increased transient parking revenues at both the Servicenter Garage and the 375 Longwood Avenue Garage. Rental income increased for the 375 Longwood Avenue office building. MASCO frequently bills back its members for activities done together on their behalf. In FY2007, revenues in this category increased as a result of transit expenses for shared shuttles and fees from Harvard University for LMANet services. In addition, due to an accounting change, revenues for energy related consulting and legal expenses are being recorded as revenue and expense in FY07 rather than being recorded on the balance sheet as in the past. This resulted in an increase of close to \$600,000 in both revenue and expense.

FY07 was the 7th consecutive year in which MASCO waived the Area Planning assessment fee, saving the members close to \$925,000.

**Expenses:** Operating expenses totaled \$29 million in FY07. The primary reason for the increase over the previous year was professional and contract services related to costs associated with transportation services, additional parking expenses, and the legal and consulting expenses for energy not recorded as expenses in FY06. Professional and Contract Services continue to be the largest expense category, accounting for 50% of MASCO's total expenses.

Investment income increased substantially. Total investment income for FY07 was \$745,000 of earned investment income and \$868,000 of unrealized gain on investment.

### Cash and Investments/Assets and Liabilities:

MASCO ended the year with a current ratio of 1.48 times. Current assets increased due to additional cash generated and invested in short term US treasuries and timing related to various balance sheet accounts. Current liabilities decreased due to a lower amount for current debt and timing related to balance sheet accounts on the liability side. MASCO's total investment pool continued to grow and ended the year at \$17.9 million. Capital expenditures totaled \$496,000 for the year.

Subsequent to year end MASCO refinanced the bonds used to fund the 375 Longwood Avenue complex. Going forward this will result in reduced debt on the balance sheet as a result of using the debt service reserve fund to pay off a portion of the original bonds. In addition, MASCO will experience significant interest expense savings.

*This information was summarized from MASCO's audited financial statements for the years ending June 30, 2007 and July 1, 2006. For a complete copy of MASCO's audited financial statements, call 617-632-2790.*

<b>Consolidated Statements of Operations</b> (in thousands)	<b>2007</b>	<b>2006</b>
<b>Net revenue</b>	<b>\$30,637</b>	<b>\$28,679</b>
Operating expenses	28,939	26,855
<b>Income from operations</b>	<b>1,698</b>	<b>1,824</b>
Other income:		
Investment income	745	479
Unrealized gain on investments	868	111
Gain/loss on disposal of assets	(70)	0
<b>Income before income taxes</b>	<b>3,241</b>	<b>2,414</b>
Benefit (provision) for income taxes	104	(52)
<b>Increase in unrestricted net assets</b>	<b>\$ 3,345</b>	<b>\$ 2,362</b>
<b>Consolidated Balance Sheets</b> (in thousands)	<b>2007</b>	<b>2006</b>
<b>Assets</b>		
Current assets	\$ 7,582	\$ 7,178
Investments:		
Restricted	3,313	2,919
Debt service reserve fund	3,020	2,917
Unrestricted	6,588	4,731
Other	5,000	5,000
Other assets	555	695
Property and Equipment - net	17,630	18,338
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>\$43,688</b>	<b>\$ 41,778</b>
<b>Liabilities and net assets</b>		
Current liabilities	\$ 5,122	\$5,714
Long-term debt	15,831	16,975
Other liabilities	579	672
Net assets:		
Unrestricted	18,843	15,498
Temporarily Restricted for area planning	3,313	2,919
<b>Total liabilities and net assets</b>	<b>\$43,688</b>	<b>\$ 41,778</b>



## Welcoming faculty and staff

Each fall Colleges of the Fenway has a series of socials welcoming students, faculty and staff to the campuses, and providing a forum for the connections that encourage collaboration. With several new restaurants open in the area, COF ventured off campus this fall. On September

20, COF kicked off the academic year with a

Faculty/Staff Social at Cambridge 1; from left,

Matt Maderos from MassArt, Michele

Crews from Wheelock College, Claire

Ramsbottom, executive director of

Colleges of the Fenway, Mary

Lilly from the Massachusetts

College of Pharmacy and

Health Sciences and

Eric Bird

of MassArt.

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## COF explores less commonly taught languages

The Colleges of the Fenway received a grant from The Council of Independent Colleges to participate in the first Network for Effective Language Learning (NELL) conference, held at Drake University on July 9-13.

The week-long program introduced participants to Drake's Language Acquisition Program - a unique approach in which language acquisition specialists, native-language speakers and language instructors mentor students in their learning process. The program requires students to develop electronic portfolios, contribute to online blogs and engage in other electronic education tasks.

"Language blogs are a wonderful tool for our students," said Eduardo Febles, Assistant Professor of Modern Languages at Simmons College.

"They can upload audio clips that they have recorded and the professor can respond with feedback. The electronic component is natural to our students who come from a generation steeped in technology. From a pedagogical standpoint, I think it makes sense to adopt these innovations as they permit us to track students' progress in a more efficient manner."

COF's goal is to advance the

collaboration initiated at the conference, continue communicating with other participating institutions to share language-learning resources and host consultants on campus during the 2007-2008 academic year.

### Collaborating with other universities

"I think that networks in general are very powerful ways of sharing information across different universities," said Febles. "Not only are the social aspects enjoyable, but we can learn from each other. With one goal in mind, we can all put our heads together to find solutions. That's the most inspiring aspect of the program for me."

At the conference, COF participants also drafted an institutional plan for the creation of a COF foreign language program that would introduce a new critical language, such as Arabic, develop a strategies course for language learners and incorporate some of the ideas explored during the week.

Other participants included teams of faculty members and academic administrators from Bethany College, Carson-Newman College, Saint Joseph College, Salve Regina University, St. Edwards University and Tugalo College.

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