

## 11/21/21 [AllUnit] Happy Thanksgiving

Hello friends and colleagues,

It's been a rough 18 months or so! But as we approach the Thanksgiving holiday, we'd like to take a moment to be thankful for many of the things that have been going well here at UMass and across the Commonwealth.

First and foremost, we're thankful for all of our members! Your labor – under very difficult circumstances – has kept the University running. And your support for and membership in the union gives us all the power to negotiate to keep us safe, well-treated, and best able to serve our students and the Commonwealth.

We're thankful that the Fall re-opening has been so successful for so many students. It's been a genuine pleasure for many of us to be back on campus with our students and colleagues. We're thankful for the COVID testing and vaccines available on our campus, and to everyone who has helped to keep us healthy and safe.

We're thankful for the 4th largest class of first-year students ever, despite all the uncertainty, changes to admissions processes here and elsewhere, visa problems, and so on. We're confident that the UMass admissions team – among the best in the country – will keep enrollments on track as things continue to return toward normal.

We're thankful for the federal relief packages and stimulus funds, which helped so many people and are giving our state tremendous financial latitude. With the passage of the infrastructure bill (and likely passage of a social support bill), states will be seeing even more money to spend on important priorities – like higher education!

We're thankful that the Commonwealth has a surplus of over \$5 billion, due to the federal stimulus and unexpectedly high tax receipts over the last year. And we're thankful for the \$11 billion more that is coming to Massachusetts with the recent infrastructure bill. We're hopeful campus leadership will do the right thing, and convince the Board of Trustees and the state legislature that the Commonwealth's flagship public university deserves the support to support our faculty and staff to pursue outstanding teaching and research.

We're thankful for the many contributions, large and small, that help our University reach its goals. At the same time, we're thankful to be part of a public institution and we're grateful to live in a Commonwealth where we recognize the obligations of the wealthy to the greater good. Our

very highest earners can and should contribute back to the very society that lets them earn such wealth! Please do your part by signing the [Fair Share Amendment Vote Pledge](#).

Best wishes for a Happy Thanksgiving!

In solidarity,

MSP Executive Committee