

Colleges

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president for enrollment.

Berklee saw a 14 percent increase in applicants over last year with 6,677 students applying for the fall semester, Campbell said, which is a new school record.

Also partially responsible for the larger applicant pool are the live auditions the school began holding around the world in 2006.

The school expects to have an incoming

class of about 1,000 students, compared to the 975 freshmen last year. Berklee has just under 800 on-campus beds.

Boston University received 43,979 applications this year, a 5.3 percent increase from last year, according to spokesperson Colin Riley. It represents yet another school record.

This year the school saw a 21 percent increase in early decision applications and a 19 percent increase in international applicants.

The incoming class is expected to be around 3,900 students, compared with last year's class of 4,000 students. BU has 11,800 on-campus beds.

Lion Head

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Department and filed a police report with District 4. Sgt. Gino Provenzano of the Community Service Office did not immediately return a request seeking comment on the incident.

If anyone has the lion head, "I'd be happy to pick it up, no questions asked," Byrne said. "If we get it back and it was not damaged significantly, the reinstallation would be all that less time consuming."

Anyone with information regarding the missing piece can call *The Boston Courant*

anonymously or Byrne at 635-3129.

If the lion head is not recovered, the city will cast a new one based on one of the other heads. Costs have not yet been estimated.

The Johnson Gates were built in 1905 by Guy Lowell, the same architect who designed the Museum of Fine Arts, according to Jeanie Knox, director of external affairs for the Emerald Necklace Conservancy.

Ellen Cheney Johnson paid for the erection of two statues, located on Westland Avenue, to be the grand entrance to the Back Bay Fens as a memorial for her husband.

The lion heads originally spouted water into basins below, which served as horse troughs. After a draft animal epidemic swept the city in 1919, the fountain was turned off.

Nonprofit

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Apartments at 33 Blossom Street, and Kenmore Abbey at 488 Commonwealth Avenue.

"We still have quite a ways to go. It could happen or not happen," said POAH spokesperson Maria Platti. However, if the purchases are finalized, "It would be our intention to preserve affordable housing in these units."

Franklin Square House has 193 affordable housing units, Blackstone has 145 units, and Kenmore Abbey has 199 units.

"There's going to be a lot of very happy residents in this city," said Consuelo Gonzales-Thornell, treasurer for the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA), during a hearing on Blackstone and Kenmore Abbey earlier this month. "I congratulate (POAH) for their work."

It would cost POAH \$70.3 million to purchase and renovate the Blackstone property, according to the BRA, and \$65.3 million to purchase Kenmore Abbey.

POAH intends to complete a \$10.5 million renovation project at Blackstone, including new kitchens and bathrooms, reconfigured common areas, window replacement, new HVAC and ventilation equipment and other system upgrades, according to the BRA.

Renovations to Kenmore Abbey would total \$7.7 million, including the addition of a computer room or library, exterior masonry work, parking area repairs, a new ventilation system, upgraded elevators, and a reconfiguration of lobby, office and unit space.

At least partial funding will likely be provided by MassHousing, which has granted POAH "official action status," the preliminary step in securing a loan, according to MassHousing spokesperson Tom Farmer. Any loan would be contingent on POAH renewing Section 8 contracts.

Under POAH ownership, Kenmore Abbey would remain as affordable housing until 2030, and Blackstone contracts would extend until 2032, according to the BRA.

Because the Franklin Square House project has not yet gone before the BRA board, fewer details are available.

Fedor

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was always trying to figure out, 'How can we fill these empty spaces?'"

During his time with WGMS, Washington Street reached an occupancy rate of 96 percent.

Fedor plans to return to his hometown of

Cleveland, Ohio to be closer to family and begin a new role in neighborhood-based economic development. He looks forward to attending Cleveland Indian games once again.

Fedor hopes the Washington Street district and South End as a whole will continue to be developed and improved. He hopes to be able to visit an ice cream shop across from Peter's Park when he comes back for a visit.

"I think that business would thrive," Fedor said.

XV Beacon

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property," said General Manager Amy Finsilver. "Being acknowledged for our superb service and quality of product is imperative for people to know about us and learn more about the property. It also makes the employees who work so hard to give this sincere service feel good about what they're doing."

"XV Beacon Hotel was selected for its excellent guest services, impressive facilities and unique charm," said Tiffany Dowd, regional hotel inspector for *Condé Nast Johansens*.

The magazine review called the hotel "stylish and contemporary...with all the comforts and intimacy of a private home," boasting "richly decorated" rooms with "lovely views of historic Beacon Street."

Travel + Leisure reviewers praised the "surprisingly homey" hotel for its "stylish, bold interiors that contrast nicely with the

1903 Beaux-Arts building."

The 63-room XV Beacon opened in the landmark building in 1999, and has an average annual occupancy rate of 70 percent, Finsilver said.

The hotel strives "to make the guest experience satisfying and memorable, like coming home," Finsilver said.

Employees create customer profiles in order to provide personalized service, like knowing a person's favorite cologne or designer tie or getting a gift for a beloved pet.

Both magazine reviews also highlighted the complimentary Lexus car service to help guests get around town.

XV Beacon's location is another touted amenity.

"Beacon Hill plays a huge role," Finsilver said.

Given that half the hotel's guests are on corporate business and the other half stay for leisure, XV Beacon's proximity to downtown as well as the Boston Common, Freedom Trail and other historic attractions is key.

Self-Defense

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one's chair and having someone want to punch them out, and being embarrassed that their sighted friends had to come to their rescue," Myska said.

As a sighted person for most of her life, "I never perceived myself as vulnerable,"

but with her cane, she said people might see her as "a sitting duck."

The training teaches people to touch their aggressor in order to judge where the attack is coming from, and to defend themselves with various holds and blocks. It was a challenge for Myska, but incredibly rewarding, she said.

"The concept of because I'm blind I can't do it, that myth was just shattered," she said.

Muslim Center

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"It's what sets us apart," Weddady said. "There's a major emphasis on intra-relations of Muslims and interrelations of other religions and backgrounds. The benefit on the Muslim side of the equation is that it transcends ethnic and cultural divisions, since we have different Muslims that would not normally interact. On the non-Muslim side it's enriching on a cultural and social level. It's also a response to the demand that emerged after 9/11. Where are these nice Muslims? Where is the Muslim leadership?"

According to Weddady, stereotypes continue due to Muslims distancing themselves from organizations for fear of being negatively associated. Another major factor is that many local Muslims are educated, successful figures, earning income far above the national average, who often reside in the suburbs, no longer involved in community activism.

"We need to be more robust and pres-

ent," Weddady said.

While AIC does cater to many Muslim students and others who are not permanent residents, the center predominantly works with American citizens. With Boston's Muslim population spread fairly evenly over many neighborhoods and representing several ethnic groups, such as Bosnians, Africans, South Asians and Arabs, the center attracts a wide range of attendees, according to Weddady.

"We've had a really positive response," said Lauren Murphy, senior program manager and a non-Muslim, who notes that the percentage of attendees has increased greatly since the move. "People have popped up and wanted to see the space. We've been able to focus on artists, which is huge on Newbury Street."

With almost 10 events planned for March, including jazz concerts and an intercultural mixer, Weddady is excited to leverage the center to its full capacity.

"We can still do better," Weddady said. "I do believe that if Muslims are unhappy with how they are received, maybe they're not doing enough to make themselves known."

Police Report

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District 4 officer responded to a report of a robbery. The victim said he was walking behind a Northampton Street building when

three men approached. They chatted, but soon the talk turned serious: One of the men ordered the victim to hand over his money. A man punched him in the face, and another reached into his pocket and grabbed his wallet, containing about \$400. The trio fled on foot.

Police searched fruitlessly for the suspects.