

# Marching Band invited to inaugural parade

by [Daniel J. Fitzgibbons](#), *Chronicle* staff

Come Jan. 20, the 300 members of Minuteman Marching Band will be stepping lively down Washington's Pennsylvania Avenue as part of the presidential inauguration parade.

The invitation to participate in the parade was announced Monday by Gov. Paul Cellucci and President William M. Bulger.

"The University of Massachusetts played an important role in the presidential election as host of the first of three debates between the candidates," said Cellucci. "We are proud that the UMass Minuteman Marching Band will represent the University and the Commonwealth in the presidential inauguration parade."

"The University of Massachusetts Marching Band is emblematic of our student body — young men and women dedicating themselves, working hard and striving to be the best," said Bulger.

"Our University takes enormous pride in being invited to participate in President-elect Bush's inaugural," Bulger added. "It is a distinct honor to take part in this momentous national celebration. For the rest of their lives, these students will remember the day they were able to represent their University and the Commonwealth. They will learn a valuable lesson: that hard work brings rewards."

The 1.65-mile parade steps off at 2 p.m. just after George W. Bush takes the oath of office and delivers his inaugural address. Along with 37 other bands from various states and the armed services, the Minuteman contingent will pass the presidential reviewing stand.

The band last marched in an inaugural parade in 1981 and performed during inaugural ceremonies in 1985.

"In my 24 years on campus, our visits to the inaugural festivities have been a highlight," said band director George Parks. "Being invited to march in the inaugural parade is a prestigious honor for the marching band and for UMass. I'm especially pleased by this opportunity for our students. They will remember this event forever."

Band members hail from more than 90 Massachusetts communities and 16 other states. Three years ago, the band received national recognition when it was awarded the Louis C. Sudler trophy for excellence. The band has also been invited to perform at the Bands of America National Championship in Indianapolis next November.

Other collegiate bands invited to participate in the parade include the Grambling University Band, the Southwest State University Band from Minnesota, Ohio State University Band, University of North Carolina Band, Southern Methodist University Band, Texas A&M University Band, James Madison University Band and the University of Missouri Marching Mizzou.



The streets of Washington, D.C. will echo with the sounds of the "Power and Class of New England" on Inauguration Day. (Ben Barnhart photo)

