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## UNH Expert Offers Historical Comment on Boston's First Black Woman Mayor

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DURHAM, N.H.— Kim Janey makes history as Boston's first Black woman mayor and only the second in New England. The city council member becomes acting mayor of Boston as former Mayor Martin J. Walsh is confirmed as the nation's next labor secretary. Kabria Baumgartner, associate professor of American studies at the University of New Hampshire, can speak to the significance of Janey's place in history and highlight the political force Black women have played in politics through the centuries.

**Baumgartner can be reached at [Kabria.Baumgartner@unh.edu](mailto:Kabria.Baumgartner@unh.edu) (mailto:Kabria.Baumgartner@unh.edu).**

"Black women have debated politicians, influenced legislation and shaped public policy despite more than a century of exclusionary policies, preventing their election to public office and denying them full voting rights," said Baumgartner. "Facing these obstacles, Black women have turned to grass-roots organizing and community building outside formal politics, ultimately paving the way for today's Black women political leaders to step into elected public office."

Baumgartner has done extensive research on the role of Black women in New England and how they have shaped history. She specializes in 19th century African American culture and history, and much of her work focuses on the social and political realities that shaped the activism of African American women in the 19th and 20th centuries. She is the author of "In Pursuit of Knowledge: Black Women and Educational Activism in Antebellum America," which examines school desegregation in the 19th-century Northeast from the perspective of African American girls and women. She is currently working on a biography of the African American lawyer Robert Morris.

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