UMaine Leads Study to Combat Childhood Obesity

ORONO – Researchers at UMaine are leading a five-state, five-year, $2.5 million USDA study to combat childhood obesity, and they are using an unlikely tool to do so—cooking. The project, called iCook, is focused on improving culinary skills, promoting family meals and increasing physical activity.

Participants will randomly be assigned to a control or treatment group. The treatment group will attend classes every other week and have access to the iCook website, a place to share and track progress, throughout the two-year period. The classes will include topics such as proper food handling and preparation, nutrition groups and structured mealtimes.

All participants will complete surveys and have physical measurements taken four times throughout the study. Measurements for the children include height, weight and waist circumference. Children and adults will have their blood pressure taken during four screenings.

UMFK Partners on Groundbreaking $4 million Biomass Project

FORT KENT – UMFK and the Maine School Administrative District #27 recently broke ground on a $4 million biomass project on the site of the former Fort Kent Armory that is expected to save the two institutions more than $4 million in energy costs during the next 10 years.

The biomass project will provide heat and hot water to at least 12 buildings on the UMFK and Fort Kent Community High School campuses, and potentially more.

The project will lower energy costs by installing two, multi-fuel boilers to create a shared heating plant, and connect it to the 12 project facilities to provide them with space heating and domestic hot water service.

The project is the second biomass project for the UMFK campus. Last May, the University opened a $500,000 wood-to-energy heating system, which provides heat for 1.75 acres of floor space at its largest residence hall, The Lodge, and at its athletics complex.

Chancellor Extends USM President Kalikow’s Appointment

BANGOR – UMS Chancellor James H. Page has extended USM President Theo Kalikow’s appointment for an additional year. Her original, two-year appointment was scheduled to terminate on June 30, 2014. Page noted that the decision was reached in consultation with the UMS Board of Trustees.

Our state, said Page, needs a public university in southern Maine that provides affordable, accessible, relevant, quality education to its diverse communities; builds close operational connections to regional and statewide business needs and opportunities; and serves as a cultural anchor for the region.

Kalikow recently initiated an internal process to develop tangible action steps in support of the goals of student success, community engagement and fiscal stability.

UMS Trustees Approve Plan To Enhance Adult Degree Completion

BANGOR – UMS Trustees has approved recommendations from the Adult Baccalaureate Completion/Distance Education (ABCDE) Committee that aim to enhance baccalaureate degree completion by Maine’s adult (those aged 25 or older) citizens.

Key findings of the ABCDE committee’s report show that non-traditional students usually work full- or part-time, have family responsibilities, and have limited ability to relocate to pursue education. Adult students are best served by flexible educational formats; easy transferability of credits; the ability to earn credit for prior learning; having a wide variety of online academic programs to choose from; and a “concierge”—or single point of contact—for student support.

For more information on the UMS Trustees meeting, click here.
UMF Hybrid Online Master’s Program Graduates First Class

FARMINGTON – Fifteen early-childhood educators from across Maine were the first graduates to recently receive their master’s degrees from UMF’s innovative new hybrid online Master of Science in Education – Early Childhood degree program.

The UMF program was created to help educators working in the field have access to a quality graduate educational opportunity while still offering them the flexibility that an online program can provide. It is the only master’s program in early-childhood education offered solely by a Maine institution. Seventy percent of the UMF program is offered online.

Click here for more information.

UMaine Research Promotes Health Benefits of Wild Blueberries

ORONO – UMaine research says lowbush wild blueberries can promote gut health and be part of an optimal diet. Findings are more good news for medical officials and people who have resolved issues such as obesity, inflammation, allergies and headaches by regulating their digestive tracts.

A UMaine research team studied blueberry impacts on gut microbial population dynamics and gastrointestinal health in Sprague Dawley rats.

They found wild blueberries have prebiotic potential. A prebiotic is a plant fiber that promotes growth of good bacteria in the colon, thereby promoting digestive and health benefits.

UMA Prepares for Annual Convocation

AUGUSTA – UMA has announced that its annual Convocation will take place on September 20 at 3 pm. Convocation marks the formal launch of UMA’s 2013/2014 Academic Theme, chosen by UMA’s Colloquium Committee. The theme for this year is Bioethics.

This year’s keynote speaker will be Michael Grodin, Professor of Health Law, Bioethics and Human Rights at Boston University. Also speaking at Convocation will be Mary Louis Davitt, Professor of Justice Studies, and Ken Elliott, Professor of Psychology.

Another highlight to Convocation will be the recognition of this year’s UMA student Rising Scholars. Rising Scholars are nominated by faculty and staff for demonstrating academic achievement or promise.

University College Offers Advising Sessions

AUGUSTA – Although the UMS fall semester is still weeks away, college professionals recommend that people start to plan ahead to enter a university. Career considerations, financial aid application, and placement testing typically take more time and attention than people may realize. University College encourages potential students to contact a local Center to discuss their career and educational goals.

An advisor can help a student navigate the processes of academic life and can provide an important source of guidance throughout that student’s college experience.

Topics routinely discussed at an advising session include admission information, degree offerings and transfer questions, as well as financial aid information and early study for high school students.

For more please contact University College at 1-800-868-7000 or visit www.learn.maine.edu.

UMPI Proposes Expansion of Maine Solar System Model

PRESQUE ISLE – UMPI’s Maine Solar System Model celebrated its 10th anniversary on Friday with a press conference and the announcement of a proposed expansion into Canada, which would make it the first international model on record. The Maine Solar System Model was formally dedicated on June 14, 2003, after four years of construction.

The installation, which is one of the exhibits maintained by UMPI’s Northern Maine Museum of Science, remains the largest solar system model in this hemisphere, with a scale of 1:93,000,000. At this scale, one mile is equal to the distance from Earth to Sun, known as an astronomical unit. The Sun is located inside Folsom-Pullen Hall, with the planets and dwarf planets located south along Route 1. The model is a summertime destination, bringing tourists from all over the country, and even around the world, to the region.

USM Hosts Junior Engineering and Mathematics Camp

PORTLAND – Problem solving, puzzles, LEGO robotics and modular origami are all part of the recent MMSETS (Maine Mathematics Science and Engineering Talent Search) summer program for students grades 3-8. The event was held on the USM Portland campus.

Through participating in this program, students received a foundation for success in science, technology, engineering and mathematics careers.

This summer, the special topic was fractals: in geometry and problem solving, as well as modular origami models of fractals and the fractal antennas of mobile devices.
UMFK Features Drawings by Jessica Becker

FORT KENT – "Eclectic Works by Jessica Becker," a premier exhibit of drawings, will be on display through Friday, August 9 at UMFK’s Blake Library Gallery.

Ms. Becker works with different materials but specializes in traditional media such as paper, pen and ink, conté crayons, and pencil. Becker applies the traditional media to her sequential style of art depicting figures and landscapes in storyboard or comic form.

Becker got many of her inspirations from the stories she read or video games she played. She liked the idea of telling stories in both the written and art forms. For Becker, capturing the story in a piece of art gives her a feeling of accomplishment.

UMaine Receives Grant for Penobscot Dictionary

ORONO – Language revival and education are at the core of a three-year project by the UMaine, Penobscot Nation and American Philosophical Society (APS) to create a comprehensive printed version of the Penobscot Dictionary, complete with an English index and searchable online database.

The project was recently awarded a National Endowment for the Humanities grant of $339,411.

Researchers hope to add 30,000-45,000 words, phrases, sentences and usage examples from field notes and other archived materials to an existing manuscript—which was created from index cards, then entered into a digital text file format in the mid-1980s—to prepare an updated edition of the dictionary.

UMF Features Artwork By High School Students

FARMINGTON – The Emery Community Arts Center on the UMF campus recently featured the art of local high school students with the second annual “Celebrate Our Youth” exhibit.

Sculpture, claywork and mini installations by students from Mt. Blue High School art classes were on display in the Flex Space Gallery and throughout the Emery Center. This year’s show is dedicated to the late Arthur Perry, a former Mt. Blue High Schoolteacher who was a longtime supporter of local arts and area youth.

UMaine Law School Hosts Information Privacy Summer Institute

PORTLAND – The University of Maine School of Law continued to solidify its reputation in information privacy law this summer when it hosted the second annual Information Privacy Summer Institute, a two-week, for-credit program devoted to the emerging field.

The Summer Institute is increasing in popularity among Maine Law students, as registration doubled over last year’s inaugural program. Five attorneys also joined the students in courses taught by Omer Tene, Associate Professor at the College of Management School of Law in Israel and Kris Klein, Partner at nNovation LLP.

The Institute culminated in the June 21 Navigate conference, which provided fresh perspectives on emerging privacy issues, put in context by curated art.

UMM’s MESSY Camp Focuses on Climate Change

MACHIAS – Through a week of field trips, experiments, and projects, participants of UMM’s MESSY camp will learn about 21st century environmental challenges, create their own solutions for real-world problems, and, hopefully, become better stewards of the environment.

Climate change will be the focus of MESSY 2013 as campers work alongside UMM faculty and researchers to understand how climate change is impacting the environment and what can be done about it. Highlights of the week will include storm surge modeling and analysis using geographic information systems, water sampling and assessment of the temperature and pH of the local endangered salmon habitat, and development of an energy conservation project.

For more information, visit www.machias.edu/messy.

USM Offers Updated Omnidome Show

PORTLAND – USM recently presented an updated version of the omni-dome "Eight Planets and Counting" program on the USM Portland campus. Humanity’s knowledge of the solar system has changed dramatically within the last few years.

The omni-dome "Eight Planets and Counting" program guided viewers through the solar system: from our parent star, the Sun, out to the realm beyond Neptune. Along the way, the program visited each of the eight planets in turn, explored the Moon, and flew through the asteroid belt.
UMPI Partners to Establish Downtown Gallery, Art Studios

PRESQUE ISLE – UMPI will soon have a physical presence in downtown Presque Isle as part of a major project to establish the region’s very first facility dedicated to the visual arts. During a recent press conference, officials from the University and the Wintergreen Arts Center announced the details of the project. The two entities are working with building owners, the City of Presque Isle, and several other partners to transform 149 State Street into the Northern Maine Center for the Cultural Arts. The building already houses the Wintergreen Arts Center on its first floor, but will soon feature UMPI’s Downtown Art Gallery on the second floor and UMPI’s Art Studio Space on the third floor.

The 2,300-square-foot second floor space will include an expansive, museum-quality art gallery that will allow for the display of large artwork and higher profile exhibitions, as well as larger group exhibitions. The space will also include an office and room for climate controlled storage of artwork.

UMA’s Nursing Completion Program Receives Award

AUGUSTA – UMA’s Bachelor of Science - Nursing Completion Program (RN-BSN) was recently awarded an American Holistic Nurses Association (AHNA) Annual Excellence in Holistic Nursing Education Award at the association’s annual conference.

AHNA is a non-profit membership association that promotes the education of nurses in all aspects of holistic healing, a nursing specialty concerned with the integration of a person’s mind, body, and spirit with their environment.

The award recognizes programs in nursing that reflect the highest standards of holistic nursing education through exceptional, substantive and innovative curriculum.

For more information about the RN-BSN Program at UMA visit: http://www.uma.edu/rn-bsn.html

UMM Displays Historic Washington County Photographs

MACHIAS – An exhibit of historic photographs of Washington County from the Penobscot Marine Museum’s collection was recently on display at the UMM Art Galleries. “Washington County Through Eastern’s Eye” is drawn from the Eastern Illustrating & Publishing Company collection, based on glass plate negatives shot from 1909 through the 1950s for use as photo postcards. The museum has more than 50,000 glass plate negatives of one-of-a-kind images of farms, industries, small businesses, stores, bridges, schools, and other “ordinary scenes.”

This is the fourth stop for the exhibit, which opened in Cherryfield in February. The exhibit features 33 framed prints with captions, and a companion “virtual exhibit” features dozens more photos and captions on the museum’s web site at www.penobscotmarinemuseum.org.

Meet the Editor

BANGOR – This issue of Making a Difference was researched, edited, and designed by Jaclyn Stevens of Boothbay Harbor, Maine. Jaclyn recently graduated from the University of Maine with a B.S. in journalism and a concentration in advertising.

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