Inauguration of USM President Selma Botman

PORTLAND — Selma Botman was inaugurated as USM’s 10th president on Saturday, April 25, on the Portland campus. Performances by USM music majors, student artwork, and poster presentations of student research projects were showcased as part of the event. Her inaugural remarks celebrated, in part, the role of higher education in transforming the lives of students, their families, and their communities.

University of Maine System Chancellor Richard L. Pattenaude installed Botman. Botman’s friends and former colleagues also offered brief remarks.

Prior to joining USM in July of 2008, Botman served as executive vice chancellor and university provost for The City University of New York (CUNY).

She has made a personal commitment to student success, focusing on the importance of earning a degree. She has regularly scheduled lunches and dinners with USM students, and has visited 11 Maine high schools to speak with students about the value of higher education.

UMPI’s Wind Project

PRESQUE ISLE — UMPI’s Wind project is now entering its final stages.

Construction crews took about four days to put the finishing pieces of the wind mill together, and the wind turbine is now fully installed.

This $2 million project, which began construction earlier this year, will create more than $100,000 in annual energy savings and keep an estimated 572 tons of carbon dioxide from being released into the atmosphere each year.

The turbine will remain in standing position, as crews continue to run tests and diagnostics on it.

A Windmill Commissioning ceremony will occur at 11 a.m. on May 14, at the Campus Center. It is estimated that the windmill will also begin producing electricity around the time of commissioning.

For more information on the UMPI windmill visit: www.umpi.edu/wind.

Congressional Initiative Promotes Tidal Power Research

ORONO — Thanks to a $951,500 federal appropriation, UMaine researchers will lead a collaborative effort to advance efforts to develop Maine’s tidal power resource. The funding comes from a Congressional initiative developed by the Maine delegation.

The money will be used to continue assessing current prototypes and models of turbines that can be submerged in the ocean to produce power using tidal currents. Although UMaine will lead the project, Maine Maritime Academy and Portland-based Ocean Renewable Power Company (ORPC) are partners in the ongoing research.

In addition to involving students from both UMaine and MMA in creating a new industry, there is abundant opportunity for Maine’s small coastal communities to benefit from the prospect of jobs and positive economic spin-off.

Award Winning Poet Tracy Smith Featured as UMF Visiting Writer

FARMINGTON — UMF’s Bachelor of Fine Arts in Creative Writing program announced award-winning poet Tracy Smith as the final reader in its 2008-2009 Visiting Writers Series.

Smith’s passionate poetry speaks of her touching life experiences and for the unfortunate children of the world who cannot speak for themselves. Her poems have appeared in numerous literary journals.

Her book, "The Body’s Question was awarded the 2002 Cave Canem Poetry Prize. Her second book, "Duende," won the James Laughlin Award from the Academy of American Poets.

Smith received degrees in English and creative writing from Harvard College and Columbia University and was a Wallace Stegner Fellow in poetry at Stanford University from 1997-99, and currently teaches creative writing at Princeton University.

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In addition to involving students from both UMaine and MMA in creating a new industry, there is abundant opportunity for Maine’s small coastal communities to benefit from the prospect of jobs and positive economic spin-off.
UCB Vet Tech Students Hold Animal Wellness Day

BANGOR — Students in UCB’s Veterinary Tech program held the second annual Animal Wellness Day on the UCB campus.

During the expo, Vet Tech students offered rabies shots for dogs and cats at the cost of just $5. Students also offered free nail trimmings, and t-shirts, baked goods, and raffle tickets were for sale. All proceeds benefited local rescues and the Veterinary Technician’s Organization.

The UCB Vet Tech program is the only such program offered in the state. Upon completion from the two year program, Vet Tech graduates often go on to such jobs as veterinary technician, wildlife rehabilitator, animal control officer, humane society director, kennel manager, horse trainer, and veterinary medical supply company representative.

UMaine Students Raise Funds for Children’s Service Dogs

ORONO — A group of UMaine students who successfully raised money last spring to buy a service dog for a local child with Muscular Dystrophy is planning another fundraising cookout this year, with three live bands, on the UMaine Mall.

"Rock the Dog II" will include representatives from the Tail Waggin’ Dog Training Center in Levant and several of the center’s clients and their service dogs.

The first Rock the Dog event was organized last year by Hart, Hancock, and Oak residence halls and the UMaine Health Professions Club to raise money to help young Nathan Robichaud of Milford — who uses a wheelchair because of his Muscular Dystrophy — to buy a service dog to help him with his daily needs.

The event, supplemented by bottle drives, raised almost $2,500 towards the purchase of the dog.

UMFK Nursing Society Inducts New Members

FORT KENT — Eleven current UMFK students and two community leaders were inducted into the UMFK Nursing Honor Society.

All students have excelled in the four-year Bachelor of Science in nursing program at UMFK and are very active in campus activities.

The UMFK Nursing Honor Society was formed in the spring of 1998 for the purpose of recognizing and fostering academic excellence and scholarship among students, alumni, and community leaders in nursing.

In addition to the induction, the ceremony featured a keynote address by Christine Gary, RN, MSN with Cary Medical Center.

“A Call To Men” Co-Founder To Speak On Domestic Violence

PRESQUE ISLE — The co-founder of a national organization committed to ending violence against women visited UMPI to give a presentation on domestic violence and community strategies for addressing it.

Ted Bunch, an educator, activist, lecturer, and co-founder of A Call to Men: The National Association of Men and Women Committed to Ending Violence Against Women, delivered a presentation entitled How Can You Stop Domestic Violence in Aroostook County?

Bunch is recognized both nationally and internationally for his expertise in organizing and educating men in the effort to end violence against women. He is dedicated to strengthening community accountability to end all forms of violence against women.

For more information about A Call to Men, visit www.acalltomen.org.

UMFK Student Support Services Recognizes Trio Students

FORT KENT — Student Support Services office at UMFK held its first recognition banquet to honor several students and staff involved in the TRiO program.

TRiO programs are designed to help low-income and first-generation Americans enter college, graduate, and move on to participate more fully in America’s economic and social life.

The banquet’s guest speaker was Jerry Ellis, retired director of the College Success Programs at the University of Maine.

TRiO is a nationwide, federally-funded organization committed to providing educational opportunity for all Americans regardless of race, ethnic background, or economic circumstance.
UMaine to Host Robotics Competition for Middle, High School Students

ORONO — UMaine’s Robotics Club hosted VEX, a robotics competition for middle and high school students on April 11, 2009.

The VEX league was piloted last year, when only one official event was held. This year the program has grown exponentially with more than 1,500 teams worldwide. This was the first VEX event to be held in the state of Maine.

Those who participated in the event, included: Portland Arts & Technology High School, Greely High School, Falmouth High School, Jay High School, Cape Elizabeth, Sanford High School and United Technologies Center Region 4 of Bangor.

USM Grad Students Collaborate on Bigelow Labs Research

PORTLAND — Two USM biology graduate students, Heather Anne Wright and Kate Callnan, both of Portland, spent a month off the coast of Uruguay conducting research with Chief Scientist William Balch from Boothbay’s Bigelow Laboratory.

Wright and Callnan studied one of the largest recurring algae blooms on earth that appears every December off the Patagonian Shelf.

Bigelow Laboratory for Ocean Sciences is a center for global ocean discovery and home to marine scientists from all over the world.

For more information, about the Bigelow Laboratory research that Wright and Callnan contributed to, go to: http://www.bigelow.org/research/content.php?cID=228

UMF Hosts 11th Annual Michael D. Wilson Symposium

FARMINGTON — UMF held its eleventh annual Michael D. Wilson Symposium, a two-day, university-wide event in celebration of outstanding scholarship and creative achievements across academic disciplines. Symposium brings together UMF students of all ages to showcase their original and independent research and scholarly works and to share them with the campus and local community.

UMF’s Symposium brings together almost 400 students in collaboration with their faculty mentors. Students are actively engaged through the academic year in the process of project creation and development and in-depth academic research of their work, which is then exhibited at Symposium in the form of papers, oral and poster presentations, original student readings, art gallery exhibits and performances.

Events were held at various venues on the UMF campus and were free and open to the public.

UMM Students Organize East Machias River Race

MACHIAS — Students in the recreation and tourism management program at UMM were busy planning an exciting race down the East Machias River.

The East Machias River Challenge was a six-mile canoe race down the East Machias River. The final leg of the race was a challenging set of rapids through Mill Park in East Machias.

The East Machias River Challenge was also an excellent event for spectators. There was live musical entertainment, great food, family games in the park, and a raffle for a kayak, PFD, and paddle.

For more information, please contact Andrea Ednie at (207) 255-1303 or aednie@maine.edu.
UMaine Student Receives Citizenship Award

ORONO — UMaine Master of Business Administration student Brenton Murray of Orono has won the 2009 Active Citizenship Award in Community Service from the Bodwell Center for Service and Volunteerism for his work organizing a UMaine chapter of Habitat for Humanity and other charitable work.

The Active Citizenship Award is given to a student, student group, or campus organization that has dedicated many hours to volunteering, community service projects, or service to UMaine.

Murray also has been involved with working for the homeless in his home town of Tempe, Ariz. He received the Bodwell Center award at the Community Engagement Gala, held April 2.

UMA Receives $100,000 Grant for Veterans’ Services

AUGUSTA — UMA is one of just 20 institutions of higher learning across the nation, and the only one in New England, to receive a highly competitive $100,000 grant from the ACE/Wal-Mart Success for Veterans Award Grants project.

According to ACE/Wal-Mart, nearly 250 applications were reviewed by a selection committee of higher education leaders, program and policy directors, and veterans.

UMA currently has in place a strong veterans’ support system, including a peer mentor program and veteran counseling. The university also puts out a veterans and service member’s newsletter called The Welcome Mat and recently introduced its first Summer Military Semester, making five online courses available to veterans and service members who are stateside or overseas.

Targeted activities of UMA’s Military Achievement Project will include the creation of a student veteran organization, online social network, veteran peer mentors, designated course sections, and entrepreneurial training.

UMF Wins National "Power Down for the Planet" Challenge

FARMINGTON — UMF has won the first-ever, national "Power Down for the Planet" challenge, a national competition to fight global warming by pledging to reduce the amount of energy used by computers on campus.

Over 24 percent of the UMF campus community committed to sustainable computing practices. The contest results are based on which campus can recruit the highest percentage of their campus members to pledge to set their computer to sleep mode when not in use and to purchase Energy Star qualified computers when available.

UMF is dedicated to graduating responsible global citizens and demonstrating sound sustainable practices.

USM Business Plan Winners Transform Garbage to “Green”

PORTLAND — Two graduate students at the USM Muskie School of Public Service are winners of the 2009 USM Student Business Plan Competition for their new venture, Organic Alchemy Composting.

Selected from among 33 entries statewide, the Portland-based company will collect food waste from area restaurants, supermarkets, hotels, and other food establishments, and convert it to high-quality compost for retail sale.

Organic Alchemy Composting was named the 2009 winner at a recent meeting of the USM Corporate Partners, a longtime supporter of the competition.

UMS Chancellor Delivers ‘State Of The University’

BANGOR — University of Maine System Chancellor Richard L. Pattenaude said that the university system must make “difficult choices” in the weeks ahead to achieve the financial sustainability, quality, and affordability of Maine’s public universities.

Pattenaude’s statement was part of biennial “State of the University” address delivered by the UMS chancellor to a joint session of the Maine State Senate and House of Representatives.

Pattenaude told lawmakers that he is working with trustees, presidents, faculty, and staff to craft a long-term plan to transform the University System.

The plan, entitled “New Challenges, New Directions,” is intended to address the long-term financial consequences of a number of factors, including those caused by the global economic crisis.

Pattenaude said the long-term changes he and others envision will focus the universities and the university system's centralized operations center on those functions that are most closely tied to their respective missions.

To view the full press release visit: http://www.main.edu/pdf/4-14-09StateoftheUniversitypressrel.pdf

This edition of Making a Difference was created and edited by Jessica Hickernell, a UMaine junior majoring in journalism, who is an intern in the University of Maine System Office of External Affairs. Jessica has assisted with creating the newsletter all semester and this is the first issue that she created on her own.