Energy Bill Includes $5M for UMaine
ORONO - The 2010 energy and water budget bill, which includes a $5 million appropriation for UMaine, was approved by the House of Representatives and is on its way to final passage in Congress. The federal money will be used for research and development of offshore wind turbines at UMaine.

The Gulf of Maine is considered one of the nation’s top coastal locations for offshore wind farms because of its powerful, year-round winds. The state is currently considering seven locations off the coast of Maine as sites of deep-water test projects, while university researchers are working to design, manufacture, and test floating wind power technology.

Federal Grant Helps Maine Teachers
PORTLAND - With the help of federal grants, Maine’s public school teachers are visiting a USM lab and learning how to get their students ready to pursue careers in the sciences. To date, the program has served more than 40 Maine elementary and middle school teachers in disciplines such as microbiology, immunology, cancer biology, and the physics of light.

The first step of the project gave them a new perspective on science by using USM’s advanced lab equipment. In subsequent phases, other USM faculty and staff members worked with teachers to develop visual resources for classroom uses.

The program is funded through a five-year Science Education Partnership Award (SEPA) and a $1.3 million grant from the National Center for Research Resources (NCRR) and the National Institute of Health (NIH).

New Early College Scholarship Opportunities
MACHIAS - Five years ago, UMM established its Early College Program to promote higher education and to help students get a head start on their college careers. The success of this program led UMM to expand the scholarship opportunities for Early College students.

Beginning with the Spring 2010 semester, UMM will make it possible for area high school students to receive scholarships covering 50% of tuition for up to two courses each semester, including summer sessions. The new scholarship program covers all classes offered live on the UMM campus. Eligible students will be able to finish a full year of college, at a substantially reduced cost, before they even graduate from high school.

For more information or to apply for the UMM Early College program, contact Carol Wolf, at 255-1264 or cwolf@maine.edu.

UMF students, citizens, and non-profit groups pose to form the number 350, as they observed an International Day of Climate Awareness at UMF. 350 Day is part of a campaign to create global solutions to limit the carbon in the atmosphere to 350 parts per million. The events held on campus and throughout the community focused on combating climate change, reducing energy usage, improving energy efficiency, and celebrating the natural riches of Maine.
UMA Program Offers Public Lectures in November

AUGUSTA - UMA’s new Holocaust, Genocide and Human Rights Program offered two more public lectures this month. The November programs are part of a year-long set of celebratory events inaugurating the University of Maine at Augusta’s new minor in Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Studies.

An interdisciplinary program which integrates scholarship and practice, the minor encourages students to examine genocide and human rights within their historical and cultural contexts, to understand the causes of genocide, and to consider how to create a just society in their community and in their world.

UMF Receives Grant to Fund Student Research on Maine Ponds

FARMINGTON - A prestigious Quimby Family Foundation grant of $20,000 has been awarded to UMF to fund student research on the effects of climate change on high elevation ponds in Maine. The project will concentrate on research conducted during the summer of 2010. Data for the study will be gathered from ponds on Tumbledown and Bigelow mountains, with other potential sites on the Appalachian Trail. The grant will provide stipends for three students, purchase new weather station monitoring equipment, and help pay for related research expenses.

Forest Future Described in New UMaine Report

ORONO - Maine people, New England’s governors, and federal officials have all expressed interest in landscape scale conservation, creating an unprecedented opportunity to conserve Maine forests and maintain the values they provide for Maine’s residents and visitors.

This is the central theme emerging from 18-month effort resulting in a report that was presented to Gov. John Baldacci on November 5.

The report, which was coordinated by and created at UMaine’s Center for Research on Sustainable Forests, recommends a pursuit of a new, more robust public/private partnership to conserve large unfragmented and undeveloped tracts of forest land for a variety of uses, including timber production, recreation, wildlife habitat, and resource protection. It also outlines steps to maintain the sustainably managed forest, enhance recent conservation efforts, and promote a broad variety of economic and recreational uses.

UMFK Kicks-Off National Cybersecurity Awareness Month

FORT KENT - A UMFK professor and other UMS colleagues are kicking-off the celebration of National Cybersecurity Awareness Month with the support of a $30,000 grant from UMS, related to the Agenda for Action.

The grant supports, among other things, the purchase of computing equipment for high school teams who will be preparing for, and participating in, the first-ever statewide cyber defense competition for high school students to be held in March 2010. A key element of the project is raising high school students’ awareness and interest in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) programs through cyber defense competitions.

Campus, Community Create Wabanaki Heritage Project Garden

PRESQUE ISLE - Members of the UMPI campus and community are working together to create a new garden for the university that is tied to the local region and Native American culture.

UMPI professors received a 2009 Project Compass Educational Mini-Grant for about $1,000 this summer to work with students and community members on the installation of representative plant specimens at a small plot near the central campus park woods. These plants are used by the region’s native peoples in many ways, including food, healing, dyes, ceremonies, and artifacts.
Fourth grade students from Portland participate in children’s activities at the opening of Osher Map Library.

Osher Map Library and Smith Center for Cartographic Education Officially Open
PORTLAND - USM’s Osher Map Library and Smith Center for Cartographic Education recently opened with record crowds in attendance.

Nearly 400 people attended a ribbon cutting and open house, 275 attended the public lecture “Thoreau, his Maps, and his Image of Nature,” and over 70 attended a one-day conference. The conference also served as the inaugural meeting of the Maine Forum for Map History, a showcase for scholars who are pursuing new directions in the study of mapping.

This addition is the final segment of USM’s Portland campus redevelopment, which includes the Wishcamper Center, the Dorothy Suzi Osher Promenade, and the newly configured entrance to the Glickman Family Library.

“Sustaining the Valley” at UMFK
FORT KENT - The Center for Rural Sustainable Development (CRSD) at UMFK is holding a logo design contest, a photo contest, and an essay competition, all based on the theme “Sustaining the Valley.”

The winning logo will be adopted by the CRSD and used for its web site, letterhead, promotional materials, and publications. Along with other top entries, it will be exhibited during “Earth Week” in April 2010. All submitted designs will be archived for possible use in sustainability programming at UMFK.

The photo contest is a great way for participants to express how they view “sustainable development” in the St. John Valley.

SEAmester Program Comes to Maine
ORONO - This Spring, UMaine will collaborate with the Ocean Classroom Foundation (OCF) to offer an unusual study experience. Known as SEAmester, the program provides students with the opportunity to spend a semester aboard a 19th century-style schooner.

SEAmester features a four-course, 12-credit science and humanities curriculum integrated with the journey and ports of call throughout the Eastern Seaboard, Caribbean Islands, and Central America. UMaine will grant credits to students who successfully complete the courses.

Throughout the voyage, students assist in sailing the traditionally rigged schooner. They also benefit from leadership training, cultural immersion, and a service project in the Dominican Republic.

UMM Students Host Disabilities Awareness Night
MACHIAS - Students in the “Recreation Services for Special Populations” class at UMM recently hosted a disabilities awareness night.

Participants in this program had the opportunity to experience simulated disabilities at 10 different stations, each focused on a specific disability. The public was invited to join UMM students, faculty, and staff in experiencing firsthand what it is like to live in another’s world.

The event was sponsored by UMM’s Professional Studies Division, Student Senate, MRPASS, and Hall Council.

GIS Mapping Project Under Way in Presque Isle
PRESQUE ISLE - Officials with UMPI and the Fairmont Cemetery Association are partnering on a unique project that is helping to preserve important information about a local cemetery for future generations.

The university officials are working with members of the cemetery association to create a GIS database that will allow people to search an inventory of information about the Fairmont Cemetery, including burial data and more than 5,000 photographs of burial plots.

They have received two MEIF Small Campus Initiative Fund grants totaling $23,000 to complete this project, which serves as the very first mapping of a cemetery in northern Maine and the first large-scale, comprehensive cemetery mapping project using GIS and GPS technology in the state.
Ireland-U.S. Partnership Funds
UMaine Research

ORONO - UMaine received an international research partnership award, designed to link U.S. scientists and engineers with counterparts in Ireland. The project aims to develop strategies for isolating and detecting algal toxins that are causing major health issues for humans in some coastal areas.

Research partners in the project represent UMaine’s School of Marine Sciences and Engineering, Dublin City University, Ireland, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Queens University Belfast, N. Ireland.

The project has received more than $1 million in joint funding from the Science Foundation Ireland ($382,883), Invest Northern Ireland Department for Employment and Learning ($352,166), and the National Science Foundation ($370,490). UMaine will receive about one-third of this funding for its portion of the project.

UMA Honors Veterans

AUGUSTA - On Veterans Day, the UMA Art and Architecture Departments hosted an open house for veterans, community members, prospective students, current students, and families. There were tours of the campus and the Art and Architecture facilities, public demonstrations, displays by current students, a luncheon, and two special exhibits honoring veterans.

The open house also hosted portfolio reviews for prospective students’ works by members of the Art faculty. Students who have their portfolio reviewed at the open house or soon thereafter will be considered for a 4-year art scholarship that will pay 50% of UMA’s tuition. The student selected for this scholarship will be notified later this year.

Presidential Search Team Named for UMFK

BANGOR - UMS Chancellor Richard L. Pattenaude recently announced members of the search committee selected to review and recommend candidates for the presidency of UMFK. Earlier this fall, the current president Richard Cost announced his plans to retire at the end of the academic year.

The committee is chaired by Norman L. Fournier, a member of the UMS Board of Trustees and resident of Wallagrass. Other committee members include UMS trustees Marjorie Medd of Norway and Charles O’Leary of Orono; UMFK faculty members Kim Borges-Therien, Paul Gebhardt, and Jenny Radsm; UMFK staff Rachel Albert, Bill Ashby, and Naomi Nicholas; UMFK students Stephanie Chick and Monica Wilson (alternate); Beurmond Banville of the UMFK Alumni Association; and Fern Desjardins of the UMFK Board of Visitors.

Trustees Approve Revised Long-term Plan

BANGOR - UMS Trustees unanimously approved a long-term plan designed to maintain affordability, reduce operating costs, and provide greater focus and emphasis on addressing the state’s educational and economic interests.

The Board’s vote authorizes the System Chancellor to lead Maine’s seven public universities in implementing and/or further developing dozens of actions contained in a report entitled, “The University of Maine System and the Future of Maine.”

The report is the product of the System’s “New Challenges, New Directions” initiative, which Chancellor Richard L. Pattenaude launched in January with Board approval. At the time, Pattenaude reported that the university system would face a $42.8 million budget shortfall by 2013 unless UMS adopted “a new business model” based on reducing costs, increasing use of technology for certain administrative and educational functions, and greater focus and prioritization.

The plan and related documents may be viewed at www.maine.edu/UMSNCND.

USM Students and Faculty Honored for Contributions to Deaf Culture

PORTLAND - USM students and faculty were among the honorees when leaders of Maine’s deaf community recently gathered at the State House to honor individuals who have contributed to deaf culture in Maine. The ceremony was held as part of Maine’s Deaf Culture Week.

USM’s American Sign Language (ASL) Club was given the “Promoting ASL, Deaf Culture, and Deaf People Award” for its sponsorship of the annual Maine Deaf Film Festival. A USM professor also received a “Special Commendation Award” for her work on behalf of the deaf community.

Members of USM’s American Sign Language (ASL) Club at the recent State House ceremony are, left to right: Esther Lee-Samia of Springvale; Alicia Cote of Windham; USM faculty member Brenda Schertz of Portland; Kelly Fitzgerald of Topsham; Allison Galucki of Portland; and Kelly McCormick of Portland.

Editor-In-Training

This edition of Making a Difference was created and edited by Alison Bromley, an intern at the University of Maine System Office and a third-year journalism student at the University of Maine.