

Making a Difference

A monthly sampler of educational, cultural, and economic contributions of Maine's public universities



President Kennedy addresses participants at the ribbon-cutting ceremony.

UMaine Celebrates Hutchinson Center Expansion

BELFAST – UMaine celebrated the construction of a new wing at its Hutchinson Center in Belfast on October 5. President Robert Kennedy and others participated in a brief program and a ribbon-cutting for the addition, which adds classroom and laboratory space, creating opportunities for more academic programming which serves the needs of mid-coast Maine.

The new addition nearly doubles the center's size. More than 200 guests attended the event, which also celebrated the ninth anniversary of the Hutchinson Center's opening in 2000. For more information on the center, visit www.hutchinsoncenter.umaine.edu/.



UMA Offers Sustainable Architecture Lecture Series

AUGUSTA – Later this month, UMA's architecture program will debut a year-long lecture series called Sustainable Practices: Architects Working in Maine. The series, which includes three lectures, a gallery exhibit, and a concluding all-day Symposium, focuses

on alternative design and building practices, maintaining a practice in varying economic times, and a look at how a professional practice is sustained over time.

First up in the series is an October 22 presentation by Steven and Wiebke Theodore of Theodore & Theodore Architects in Bath. For more information, contact Eric Stark at 621-3249 or eric.stark@maine.edu.

UMFK Celebration Brings Community Together

FORT KENT – UMFK and the Greater Fort Kent Area Chamber of Commerce recently combined their respective Homecoming and Scarecrow Festival celebrations into a large, community-wide event.

The four days of festivities featured a street festival and the ever-popular annual parade. Following the parade, the community participated in the first Red Cross Disaster Relief Walk-A-Thon to raise funds for local disaster recovery.

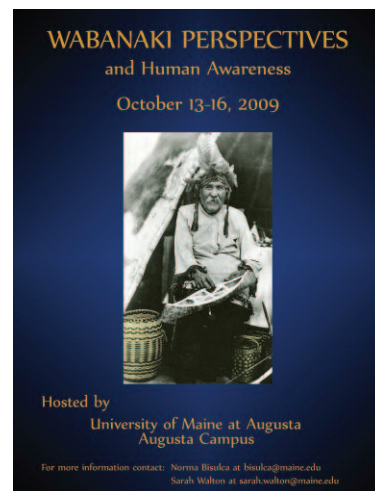
UMFK hosted a barbecue, pep rally, pageant, mini-golf tournament, 5K race, and many alumni and friends social gatherings, while sidewalk vendors set up along West Main Street sold food, specialty items, homemade goods and other products. The event provided a chance for area students, residents, and businesses to get to know one another.

UMA Hosts Four-day Wabanaki Event

AUGUSTA – UMA sponsored a four-day event titled Wabanaki Perspectives and Human Awareness, which included presentations, panel discussions, and special activities on Wabanaki life and perspectives.

Activities included presentations on Wabanaki spirituality, the experiences of Native American military veterans, and sovereignty. In addition, more than 50 Wabanaki seventh graders participated in a range of activities that included storytelling, drumming, a film presentation, and a campout.

Other activities included talking circles, native crafts for sale, music by native artists, traditional foods, art exhibits, and film presentations. For more information on the event, go to <http://www.uma.edu/wabankiperspectives.html>.



UMF Students GEAR UP to Inspire Teens

FARMINGTON – The UMF Partnerships for Success GEAR UP program recently held orientation for 40 UMF students who will be working this year with 420 middle and high school students in Jay, Dixfield, and Rumford.



UMF students prepare for the GEAR UP orientation day.

The UMF Gaining Early Awareness and Education program matches college mentors with high school students to help inspire them to pursue postsecondary education. The UMF program has seen the percentage of students interested in postsecondary education in the class of 2005 rise from 37 to 82 percent over a six year period.

UMPI Signs Agreement with Thailand Schools

PRESQUE ISLE – Officials with UMPI and the Lertlah Schools in Bangkok, Thailand, joined together to sign an agreement that will allow UMPI education students to complete their teaching certification program by traveling to Thailand and working with students there.

As part of the agreement, the Lertlah Schools will accept between 20 and 25 students in their final year with the university's teacher education program to work as teachers in their Bangkok classrooms. At the end of a successful 10-month student teaching experience, the Lertlah Schools will present an International Teaching Program certificate of completion to each student. Those students who successfully complete the Lertlah program and wish to continue at the school may be given the opportunity to teach for another year as a contracted teacher.

The first cohort of UMPI students is expected to depart for Thailand and the Lertlah Schools next spring.



UMM Celebrates Family Weekend

MACHIAS – UMM held its annual Homecoming & Family Weekend at the end of September.

Headlining the events was the return of the annual homecoming parade.

Among other events, the weekend featured an open house at the Reynolds Center, a book signing by Randall Kindleberger, the hypnotist Paul Ramsey, Clipper Classic Volleyball Tournament, a presentation about the "greening" of the O'Brien House, men's and women's soccer games, canoe jousting, and the Nathan Turk Memorial Alumni Basketball Games.

UMaine Research Shows Microbusinesses Growing in Economic Importance

ORONO – New research by UMaine economists shows that the smallest of small businesses—micro-enterprises with up to four employees—have a significant economic impact on state and even national economies. Those very small businesses in Maine are leading New England in growth.

The researchers found that the number of micro-businesses in Maine grew 9.3 percent, while businesses with five or more workers grew by 4.6 percent, between 2003 and 2007. Their findings indicated that, during this period, micro-enterprise employment in Maine increased by 8 percent, which was 5 percent more than employment in businesses with five or more workers.

The researchers also found that 22.3 percent of Maine workers were employed by micro-enterprises in 2007, while micro-enterprises represented 18.6 percent of the national employment base.

UMFK Hosts Mock Disaster Drill

FORT KENT – UMFK, Northern Maine Medical Center, and local emergency responders held a mock disaster drill at the UMFK campus on October 6.

The mock disaster presented a scenario in which an explosion occurred in the boiler room and glycol (anti-freeze) was released, coming into contact with several people nearby. As part of the exercise ten people were involved in the scenario, which resulted in artificial contamination, injuries, and fatalities.

In addition to personnel from UMFK and NMMC, participants included personnel from the Fort Kent Police Department, the Fort Kent Fire Department, and Fort Kent Emergency Medical Services.

Personnel from the Aroostook County Emergency Management Agency also attended to observe and critique the mock disaster drill.

UMPI Project Serves Native Americans

PRESQUE ISLE – Officials from around Aroostook County, the state of Maine, and New England gathered at UMPI on October 2 for a three-day meeting centered on the university's Project Compass grant program and its efforts to develop and improve culturally responsive strategies for its Native American students.

The event featured a keynote address by John Bear Mitchell, the blessing of a new student center designed specifically for Native American students, and a gathering of educators and community leaders who will determine next steps for the grant program.

The university was awarded a major grant from the Nellie Mae Education Foundation in January to better serve its Native American student population, as well as the region's Native American community. The award made the University eligible to receive up to \$750,000 over the next four years toward this effort.

UMF Students to Teach Children to Ski

FARMINGTON – This winter UMF will be offering the SnowCats Learn to Ski Program for children in grades K-3 at Titcomb Mountain in Farmington. The program will be held from January 21 to March 2.

The SnowCats program is a continuation of a long-standing relationship between UMF and the popular ski and snowboard mountain. It will provide trained student instructors to teach beginning skiing basics to young children.

UMF students will have the opportunity to learn new skills and acquire valuable work experience while also coming together with the community with everyone's health and fitness as the common goal.

UMM-USM Collaborate on Master's in Rehab Counseling

MACHIAS – UMM will collaborate with USM to offer a 54-credit graduate degree in rehabilitation counseling beginning in the summer of 2010.

The master of science in counseling will be granted through USM and the curriculum will be offered primarily through distance education technologies in the following formats: interactive television, videoconferencing, and online. In addition, selected classes will be taught on-campus at UMM.

Students who complete the three and one half year program will be eligible for national certification as rehabilitation counselors. Students who decide to take an additional three classes of targeted coursework will be eligible for state licensure as licensed clinical professional counselors.

USM Establishes Institute for Health and Social Policy

PORTLAND – The Edmund S. Muskie School of Public Service at USM has announced the formation of the Catherine E. Cutler Institute for Health and Social Policy. This new institute combines the talent and resources of three former institutes to focus more comprehensively on the effectiveness of health and human service systems and policy.

The Cutler Institute conducts research and policy analysis, program development and evaluation, and training and technical assistance projects in four closely related areas: children, youth, and families; disability and aging; population health and health policy; and justice policy.

The Cutler Institute's 200 practitioners and scholars are known for applying the latest research to real-world problems. Working closely with federal and state policy makers, nonprofits, and other universities, the Cutler Institute specializes in building collaborative partnerships focused on improving the public and private systems that support individuals, families, and communities.



Amanda Roderick, a student in the "Thoreau: Nature, Self, and Society" EYE program took this photograph during a recent field trip to Walden Pond.

New Courses Get First-year Students Ready for Success

PORTLAND – Every USM student now has the opportunity to tackle issues ranging from consumerism and the creative economy, to HIV/AIDS and the environment because of the school's new EYE courses. EYE, or Entry Year Experience, courses are designed by a team of professors from different academic departments who give a range of perspectives through rigorous reading and writing assignments, group discussions, and fieldwork.

Professors also benefit from the EYE courses. The team-teaching model exposes them to current academic scholarship in the fields of collaborating professors, and they are rewarded by interacting with and teaching students through new experiences.

First-year and transfer students with less than 24 credits are required to choose one EYE class, all of which are team taught. The requirement is part of the new USM Core, a progression of courses that begin with EYE, college writing and quantitative reasoning courses, and concludes with a capstone project related directly to a student's major.

Funding Renewed for 'Project Opportunity'



ORONO – UMaine's "Project Opportunity," a five-year government funded initiative to improve and update English language teacher training for current and future school teachers in Maine, has received \$300,000 in third-year

funding for 2009-2010.

The project, in partnership with the Maine State Education Agency and 15 local education agencies and funded by a U.S. Department of Education Title III grant, helps Maine teachers work with a growing number of students just learning or still perfecting their English language skills. It includes several educational disciplines, from math and science to history and English. It also incorporates applying the latest research in teaching English and English as a second language (ELS).

\$1.8 Million Grant Funds Initiative to Help Struggling Businesses

ORONO – UMaine is receiving more than \$1.8 million for a new initiative to help Maine employers respond to 2008 natural disasters and economic distress.

A \$1.82 million grant from the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (EDA) enables a unique and innovative new initiative being called the "Knowledge Transfer Alliance" to create a statewide network among researchers, faculty, and students at UMaine and at other UMS campuses, as well as private, public, and semi-public enterprises to work with stressed businesses.

The effort organizes a broad coalition of experts with a wide range of business, manufacturing, and innovation skills to coordinate efforts to assist struggling businesses, specifically those that have suffered in the last year from natural disasters ranging from flooding to fire, and compounded by the economic impact of being temporarily out of business.

UMS Public Comment Sessions Taking Place Across Maine

FORT KENT – More than 80 members of the UMFK community attended a public comment session for the recently proposed UMS plan titled "University of Maine System and the Future of Maine: The Final Report and Implementation Plan of the New Challenges, New Directions Initiative." This was the fourth in a series of eight meetings that allow campus community members to provide feedback and input to the UMS Board of Trustees. For a schedule of upcoming public sessions and information on other ways to provide feedback to Trustees, visit www.maine.edu/UMSNCD.



Nationwide Network Connection Expands Maine's Research Possibilities



John Richardson, Maine Dept. of Economic and Community Development; Craig Gunderson, Oxford Networks; and Jeff Letourneau, University of Maine System, at a press conference announcing completion of a high-tech fiber optic network.

LEWISTON – Earlier this month the completion of phase 2 of the University of Maine System's Research and Education (R&E) network to Boston was announced.

As part the project, Maine's fiber optic network was extended through southern New Hampshire and now continues to Boston where it connects to Internet2, a highly advanced nationwide network consortium dedicated exclusively to scientific research and education.

Maine's educational institutions and research organizations are now better positioned to compete nationally and internationally with this network, as connecting to Boston opens up bandwidth and connectivity. It enables institutions to transmit large amounts of online information securely, quickly, and more easily—all critical to research and development.

Editor-In-Training



This edition of *Making a Difference* was created, in part, by Alison Bromley, an intern at the University of Maine System office and a third-year journalism student at UMaine. Alison is originally from Holden, Maine.