University System Trustees Approve Budget for New Fiscal Year

Citing concerns about the stability of the state’s current level of funding for the next two budget years, the University of Maine System Board of Trustees on June 6 adopted a budget that includes a 2.2 percent increase ($4 million) in State support and a 7.8 percent average increase in tuition and fees for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2005.

The action was taken during the Board’s June 5-6 meeting at the University of Maine at Fort Kent (UMFK). However, a subsequent State reduction in higher education funding resulted in a final State appropriation to the University System of $3 million, a 1.7 percent net increase. (See details in “Legislative Update.”)

System Chancellor Joseph W. Westphal explained that the cost of operating the university system has increased significantly due to rising employee healthcare insurance costs and record high energy and utility expenses. “The increased cost of healthcare insurance alone is four times greater than the amount of new funds approved by the State,” Westphal noted. System leaders have been working to contain those costs through initiatives included in the University System’s strategic plan, he added.

Factoring in the State’s net increase of $3 million, the University System budget for the 2005-06 fiscal year totals $432.1 million, excluding restricted-use funds such as grants and contracts. Of that total, 40.4 percent represents student tuition and fees.

State appropriation accounts for 39.5 percent. The remaining percentage consists of revenues related to room and board and other forms of university-related sales and services.

For more information about the June 5-6 Board meeting, please visit: www.main.edu/budget.html

UMA, UMM, and UMPI Presidents Named

University System Chancellor Joseph W. Westphal and the UMS Board of Trustees recently announced the appointment of Richard J. Randall as Interim President of the University of Maine at Augusta (UMA), Cynthia E. Huggins as President of the University of Maine at Machias (UMM), and Karl E. Burgher as President of the University of Maine at Presque Isle (UMPI).

Randall, who has been serving as Interim Associate Provost at UMA since February, replaces Charles M. Lyons, who is in the final year of his term as president. Randall spent 34 years at UMA prior to his retirement in 2001, serving as a full-time faculty member, Dean of Student and Educational Services, and 13 years as Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs.

Huggins has been appointed to a two-year term as UMM President. The University System had been undertaking a national search for a new president to succeed Dr. John Joseph, UMM’s president until his death in 2003. Westphal said the national search did not produce a suitable replacement. As a result, the search committee recommended that Huggins, who had not been a candidate for the position, be asked to stay on as president.

Burgher, a mining engineer and economist, previously served as Vice President of Research and Contracts and Interim Chief Technology Officer at Fairmont State University and Fairmont State Community & Technical College in Fairmont, W.V.

In addition to his administrative and faculty work, Burgher has been committed to community development. He has worked across the U.S., facilitating socio-economic development in areas faced with sometimes very technical environmental challenges and often environmental injustices.

For more information, please visit: www.main.edu/news.html

UMaine Composites Center Announces $6.2M U.S. Army R&D Program

In a move that increases opportunities for Maine businesses and University of Maine faculty and students, UMaine has announced a $6.2 million U.S. Army research program in the UMaine Advanced Engineered Wood Composites (AEWC) Center.

The research focus will be on studies of high strength structures for military applications, and AEWC engineers will work with the U.S. Army Natick Soldier Center and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The program takes advantage of newly expanded laboratory space financed with a voter-approved bond in 2004.

Leading the effort to demonstrate the AEWC’s capabilities to the Army were University System Chancellor Joseph W. Westphal, UMaine President Robert A. Kennedy, UMaine Vice-President for Research Michael Eckardt, and AEWC Director Habib Dagher. Maine’s congressional delegation played a crucial role in supporting the program.

“This program is a major accomplishment for UMaine, and the latest recognition of its national prominence in research and development,” said Westphal, who served as Assistant Secretary of the Army in Washington, D.C., prior to coming to the University System. “It will create many new educational and research opportunities for faculty and students as well as tremendous new economic benefits and potential for the State.”

For more information, please visit: www.umaine.edu/news/releases/May05/CompositesCenter.htm
COMMENCEMENT

University of Maine System graduates received their diplomas and celebrated their achievements throughout the month of May, with commencement ceremonies held at each of the System’s seven universities. Highlights included:

• The University of Maine (UMaine) awarded a record 1,993 degrees on May 7. Author and UMaine graduate Stephen King delivered the commencement address and encouraged the graduates to spend their lives in Maine. “You’ll never be sorry,” said King. Class of 2005 valedictorian Dusty Lavoie, a Lisbon Falls native, plans to teach English at Maine Central Institute in Pittsfield in the fall.

• More than 1,000 graduates took part in commencement exercises at the University of Southern Maine (USM) on May 14. U.S. Senator Olympia J. Snowe delivered the commencement address and was presented with a Distinguished Achievement Award for her contributions to public service. Ismail Ahmed became the first graduate of the USM Lewiston-Auburn College master’s program in leadership studies and was honored with USM’s student award for outstanding contributions to student diversity. Ahmed, a Somali immigrant, co-founded USM’s International Student Organization of Lewiston-Auburn and was a founding member of Lewiston’s United Communities Coalition.

• At the University of Maine at Augusta (UMA), 600 graduates received degrees on May 14. Mark Pearson received a B.S. in business administration that was 18 years in the making. The 37-year-old father of three, who works full-time at Bath Iron Works, attended ITV classes at the Midcoast Higher Education Center in Bath, as well as traditional classes at UMA. “I’ve been laid off a few times, so I’m going to keep this in my back pocket,” Pearson told the Morning Sentinel.

• At the University of Maine at Farmington (UMF), 375 students received degrees on May 14. Priscilla Parvanta, a single mother of four from Winthrop, was awarded three bachelor’s degrees from UMF—in sociology/anthropology, individualized education/anthropology, and general studies. “Priscilla is an example of all the wonderful achievements of our newest UMF graduates, who will be avid lifelong learners and make a difference in the world,” said UMF President Theodora Kalikow.

• At the University of Maine at Presque Isle (UMPI), a record 326 students received degrees during the May 14 commencement ceremony. Avis Connors, 86, was awarded an associate degree in liberal arts after completing her coursework at UMPI’s Houlton Higher Education Center over the past five years. Dr. Caroline Gentile, who is retiring after serving for 59 years on the UMPI faculty, was honored during the ceremony.

• A record 295 students received degrees on May 7 during commencement exercises at the University of Maine at Fort Kent (UMFK). The Right Honorable Beverley McLachlin, Chief Justice of the Canadian Supreme Court, addresses graduates during UMFK’s May 7 commencement.

UMS/UMPSA IMPLEMENT NEW COMPENSATION PROGRAM

The University of Maine System (UMS) and the Universities of Maine Professional Staff Association (UMPSA) have reached a comprehensive agreement to implement the Salaried Employee Classification and Compensation Program (SECCP), a new compensation program for salaried positions. SECCP greatly improves the University System’s ability to compensate employees fairly and equitably, recruit competitively, retain talented and knowledgeable employees, and plan for and manage compensation expenses. The program is effective July 1, 2005.

“SECCP represents a major advancement in the University System’s ability to ensure that our employees are compensated fairly and competitively in relation to the marketplace,” said UMS Chancellor Joseph W. Westphal. “We are extremely grateful for the cooperation of UMPSA in working with the University System to establish this much-needed program.”

1The program does not apply to faculty or positions at the level of Dean or above.
**LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**

University and State leaders worked together in the closing days of the 2005 legislative session to avoid what would have been a “devastating” reduction in previously approved State support for Maine’s public universities.

In June, State policymakers revised the previously approved biennial budget for the two fiscal years beginning July 1, 2005. As part of that process, State-supported departments and agencies, including the University System, were told to prepare for what could amount to a five percent reduction in State funding—an amount totaling nearly $9.2 million annually for Maine’s public universities.

“It’s important that policymakers and the public fully understand the consequences of such a cut,” Chancellor Joseph W. Westphal said at the time. “Another major cut would negatively affect the University System’s ability to keep tuition levels affordable, to maintain high quality programs and services, and to continue our involvement in economic development and outreach.”

With the help and support of key members of the Appropriations and Education committees, the University System’s budget was reduced by $1 million rather than the $9.2 million amount originally discussed. “Though the loss of that $1 million still needs to be addressed, we are grateful to the Governor and Legislature for protecting higher education funding as an essential investment in Maine’s people and economy,” Westphal remarked.  

For more information about the University System’s legislative agenda, please visit: www.maine.edu/govrelat.htm

**STRATEGIC PLANNING UPDATE**

Implementation Planning for the Strategic Plan has been underway since February 2005, with more than 400 people serving on-campus and System-level committees representing every category of University life, from Distance Education to student government, from the President’s office to the registrar’s office. Members of the community are also serving on Implementation Planning committees.

At the June 5-6 meeting of the Board of Trustees in Fort Kent, Vice Chancellor Elsa Nuñez presented the first round of reports on Implementation Planning. The reports—which are available online at www.maine.edu/spp/ipp.html—were submitted by the Coordinating Chairs for each Committee. They provide an overview of each Committee’s meetings to date; offer preliminary recommendations for implementation of the Strategic Plan; address key areas of overlap with other Strategic Directions; and outline the Committee’s work for the coming year.

The second round of reports will be submitted to Chancellor Westphal in November 2005, with final reports due in Spring 2006. Full implementation is scheduled to begin in the Summer of 2006.

For more information about the UMS Strategic Planning Process, please visit: www.maine.edu/spp/

**THE UNIVERSITY OF MAINE**

UMaine and the U.S. Army recently announced a $6.2 million research project in UMaine’s Advanced Engineered Wood Composites Center. Researchers will work on developing high-strength structures for military applications. This research contract was made possible by the availability of new space, funded in 2004 by a voter-approved bond. Beginning this fall, UMaine’s College of Education and Human Development will require all new students who are studying to become teachers to have their own laptop computers. This initiative will hasten the students’ development as teachers who are capable of using technology effectively in the classroom.

**UNIVERSITY OF MAINE AT AUGUSTA**

UMA’s new Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Studies (BALS) degree, approved by University System Trustees in June, provides students with a foundation in the humanities, social sciences, mathematics, and natural sciences. Students will have an opportunity to broaden their understanding within a chosen area of concentration or through a personally constructed curriculum. Students will work closely with an academic advisor to ensure that their curriculum meets their personal and career goals. The BALS degree will be offered for Fall 2005.

**UNIVERSITY OF MAINE AT FARMINGTON**

UMF was featured in “Student Success in College: Creating Conditions That Matter,” published by the American Association for Higher Education, as one of 20 U.S. colleges and universities that serve as models of educational effectiveness. … Maine First Lady Karen Baldacci was the keynote speaker at the annual banquet to honor participants in UMF’s nationally-recognized girls’ mentoring program. … UMF received a $64,000 Fulbright-Hays Group Projects Abroad grant from the Fulbright Scholarship Foundation and the U.S. Department of Education. … After nearly four decades of outstanding campus and community service, UMF Vice President for Administration Roger G. Spear has announced his retirement.

**UNIVERSITY OF MAINE AT FORT KENT**

Work on the NEASC re-accreditation continues as the campus community prepares for a November visit by a team of reviewers from the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education. … Before the campus community began a busy summer session and preparations for a new academic year, faculty and staff took a moment to honor their own, when some 30 UMFK employees were recognized for a combined 470 years of service. … Rachel Albert, chair and director of the division of nursing, has begun her duties as the interim vice president for academic affairs. … UMF’s Student Support Services grant application to the U.S. Department of Education was recently approved for $274,335, from Sept. 1, 2005 to Aug. 31, 2006. The money is renewable each year through Aug. 31, 2009.

**UNIVERSITY OF MAINE AT MACHIAS**

In its first semester as a member of the Woods Hole Marine Science Consortium, UMM had its applicant selected for a WHMSC summer research fellowship. Theresa Hattenrath, who graduated in May with a BS in marine biology, will spend the summer in Woods Hole, Mass., studying the growth rings on clams to determine if they can be used to trace the origin of marine pollutants. … UMM professor Mike Kimball led a discussion on energy and sustainability issues, complete with an examination of a hybrid engine car.

**UNIVERSITY OF MAINE AT PRESCOT ISLE**

The University received a planning grant from the MELMAC Education Foundation to support retention initiatives on campus. A committee is working to create an application for a multi-year grant to fund a comprehensive implementation strategy. UMPI’s grant writer provided assistance to the consortium partners. UMPI continues its collaborative endeavors with the Caribou School Department in the Nellie Mae Education Foundation’s Partnerships for College Success, a new multi-year grant program aimed at improving college preparation and success for high school students. It is the only partnership in Maine, and one of four in New England. Both programs work in concert, addressing the most pressing issues in higher education.

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MAINE**

A June 2 reception thanking donors to The Joel and Linda Abromson Community Education Center on USM’s Portland campus was attended by Senators Olympia Snowe and Susan Collins. The building is named for the late State Senator Joel Abromson, and former Mayor of Portland Linda Abromson. … Carol Wishcamper and Richard McGoldrick are co-chairs of “Transforming USM: The Capital Campaign” USM’s $25-million campaign. … Summer enrollment is strong at USM with more than 4,500 students taking classes.

**UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OUTREACH CENTERS**

On May 25, University College at Houlton took part in a celebratory dinner for more than 150 high school and college graduates at the Northern Maine Higher Education Center, where the center is located. In addition to University students, students graduating from Northern Maine Community College, MSAD 29, and MSAD 70 also participated in the event. The guest speaker was Timothy D. Crowley, President of Northern Maine Community College.
CHANCELLOR’S NEWSLETTER
INSIDE:

— UNIVERSITY SYSTEM TRUSTEES APPROVE BUDGET FOR NEW FISCAL YEAR

— PRESIDENTS NAMED AT UMA, UMM, AND UMPI

— UMAINE COMPOSITES CENTER ANNOUNCES $6.2 MILLION U.S. ARMY R&D PROGRAM

— UNIVERSITY SYSTEM GRADUATES CELEBRATE ACHIEVEMENTS

— LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

— UMS STRATEGIC PLANNING UPDATE

— UMS/UMPSA IMPLEMENT NEW COMPENSATION PROGRAM

— BOARD OF TRUSTEES ACTIVITIES

— AROUND THE SYSTEM

The Chancellor’s Newsletter is a publication of the University of Maine System’s Office of External Affairs.

To receive this publication in electronic form, please send an e-mail request to editor@maine.edu. For more information about the University of Maine System, please contact:

University of Maine System
Office of External Affairs
107 Maine Avenue
Bangor, ME 04401

Phone: 207.973.3240
www.maine.edu

Nondiscrimination Notice — In complying with the letter and spirit of applicable laws and in pursuing its own goals of diversity, the University of Maine System shall not discriminate on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin or citizenship status, age, disability, or veterans status in employment, education, and all other areas of the University System. The University provides reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities upon request. Questions and complaints about discrimination in any area of the University should be directed to the campus Equal Opportunity Director.