

Dannel Malloy
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Week of October 21

Trustees -

You'll recall my pledge to visit all seven of our universities in my first month - which I accomplished with two days to spare! In that spirit, I continue to tour and learn about UMS's reach and impact by visiting more of our community educational sites even as we keep driving forward on our most important initiatives, such as unified accreditation and nailing down the right KPIs for enrollment and retention.

After our Retreat concluded Monday, Trustee Michaud and I visited UMA's East Millinocket Center (also known as the Katahdin Higher Education Center), where place-bound working adults can come for online and in-class programs and student support services (including onsite child care) from both UMA as well as Eastern Maine Community College. The Center is a good example of the work we do through UMA's Centers to take our programs to where Maine learners need them, and they will be a key asset as we redouble our attainment efforts with non-traditional-aged learners.

Thanks to our hosts USM Provost Jeannine Uzzi and Interim Dean Brian Toy, along with Dan Demeritt and UMS Chief General Services Officer Chip Gavin, Jim Thelen and I toured USM's Lewiston-Auburn College (LAC) on Thursday morning. Given USM's announced intention to consider relocating LAC elsewhere in Lewiston, it was important for me to visit to better understand how we currently operate there. I left impressed and can see why LAC is so important to its students and communities.

My work to better understand how and where we operate isn't limited to visiting locations. A day earlier, Jim Thelen and I met in Portland at USM with Kris Sahanichik, Director of the Cutler Institute for Health and Social Policy. Kris has been heading up USM's research activities over the last few years as well. With the Cutler Institute's close tie to USM's Muskie School of Public Service and partnership with the University of Maine School of Law and Graduate School of Business, the perspectives I gain in meetings such as with Kris help to shape my thinking about how to better position the University of Maine Center for Graduate and Professional Studies for growth and long-term success.

External support will be a key component of the Maine Center's success, of course, as it will be for UMS as a whole. To that end, Wednesday afternoon UMaine President Joan Ferrini-Mundy and I, along with Trustees Erwin and Johnson, led a larger UMS team in a series of afternoon presentations to the Harold Alfond Foundation Board of Trustees. After I shared my focus on enrollment, retention, graduating life-long learners, unified accreditation, infrastructure investment, and strategic marketing, Joan shared UMaine's strategic vision to foster learner success, grow and advance partnerships, and discover and innovate before turning to UMaine Dean of Engineering Dana Humphrey, Director of Athletics Ken Ralph, and Dean of Graduate Business Michael Weber for more in-depth discussions on how building new capacity and infrastructure in engineering, athletics (long a special interest of Foundation patriarch Harold Alfond), and graduate business can help revitalize UMS's flagship institution and drive the Maine economy forward. Following that, we invited USM President Glenn Cummings and Maine Center Ventures CEO Terry Sutton to join me, Trustee Erwin, and President Ferrini-Mundy for an evening panel discussion on how our largest institutions working together will lead to long-term success for UMS and Maine.

Our afternoon and evening with the Harold Alfond Foundation has been long-planned, and many people worked to plan the meetings and our presentations. They all have my thanks and gratitude. Considering how the day went, we're optimistic that Maine's most respected philanthropic organization will be willing to invest strategically in our future success.

Amidst all this work, we continued to meet your charge to engage with our university community on my unified accreditation recommendation, holding an open "town hall" meeting, faculty lunch, and BOV meeting in Machias on Tuesday and meeting with the University of Maine at Farmington staff and faculty senates on Friday. Relatedly, Jim Thelen and I met with Portland-area Senator Rebecca Millett, who co-chairs the Legislature's Education Committee, on Thursday to explain our unified accreditation recommendation as well.

Our November report to you, which I expect we will release publicly by Friday, November 8, will fully reflect both the concerns and opportunities our university leaders have shared with me and my team as we travel from campus to campus now and develop our plan for how we might successfully pursue a unified accreditation.

As I hope is evident from this week's summary alone, we are fully engaged in our work and continue to pursue success. We have no more urgent task.

Regards,
Dan