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at **UMFK**

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**LIFE**



As it approaches its sesquicentennial, the University of Maine at Fort Kent (UMFK) invites inquiries, nominations, and applications for an experienced, visionary leader with an entrepreneurial outlook to serve as its next president. Leading the institution of almost 1,600 students, including a robust population of dual enrollment students, into its next decade of prosperity and distinction, the president will also provide leadership for higher education in Maine's beautiful St. John Valley.

# ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY

Founded as the Madawaska Training School in 1878 with the aim of preparing bilingual teachers to serve the French-speaking people of Northern Aroostook County, the University of Maine at Fort Kent strives to be Maine's premier rural public university. The faculty, staff, and surrounding communities help students develop into engaged and productive citizens who appreciate the natural environment and cultural opportunities in the immediate area and across the globe.

UMFK's mission is to nurture and engage a diversity of learners and aspiring professionals in Maine's rural communities and beyond through affordable, technologically enhanced, and professionally focused educational programs. UMFK has a legacy of quality teaching in its baccalaureate and associate degree programs and has become a model of a "rural university" in New England, creating pathways to educational opportunity and professional success for rural communities and people, and offering a curriculum that emphasizes the unique features of rural communities in America.

Located in Fort Kent in the beautiful North Woods of Maine, the University fosters an appreciation and stewardship of Northern Maine's pristine natural environment through the Environmental Studies, Forestry, and Biology degree programs. The vibrant nursing program is distinguished and highly regarded in the region and state, and the business and behavioral science programs are poised for growth. Regardless of students' disciplinary pursuits, the talented and dedicated faculty and staff promote discovery and exploration of knowledge, life-long learning, and global citizenship through effective teaching, service, and scholarship.

The great outdoor environment of the St. John Valley at the northern stretch of the Appalachian Mountains and forests of New England provides UMFK with abundant resources for learning and research, as well as easy access to the joys of outdoor sports and nature activities. The University and surrounding communities also play important roles in preserving, cultivating, and celebrating the Franco-American/Acadian culture in the St. John Valley and housing one of two Acadian Archives/*Archives acadiennes* in the nation. UMFK is the only institution in the United States located at the center of the French culture of northern Maine, eastern New Brunswick, and western Québec, offering opportunities for students to study and live in a bilingual community.

The University of Maine at Fort Kent is a constituent campus of the [University of Maine System](#). Along with the presidents of the other institutions within the system, UMFK's president reports to the [University of Maine System Chancellor, Dannel Malloy](#). The president at UMFK simultaneously leads the university as its chief executive officer

and chief academic officer. Collaboration among the presidents, chief academic officers, campuses, and the University of Maine System office is a hallmark of the system. UMFK's partnership with the University of Maine at Presque Isle is especially strong. The chancellor and the other presidents appreciate UMFK as a strong social, cultural, and economic driving force in the St. John Valley and across Aroostook County.

UMFK ranks among the top tier of all northern colleges for the ninth consecutive year, according to the U.S. News & World Report 2020 rankings. The Princeton Review also named UMFK a "Best in the Northeast" college. In 2019 College Consensus named the University a "Most Affordable College/University." For the past 15 years, UMFK has been repeatedly selected as one of 224 outstanding colleges and universities that The Princeton Review recommends to college applicants in its 2020 print and online editions.



## LOCATION AND HISTORY

Nestled in the St. John Valley, an international crossroads of Maine, Quebec, and New Brunswick, the University of Maine at Fort Kent offers plentiful outdoor activities, world-class sports opportunities including an Olympic biathlon training center, and an abundance of cultural possibilities rooted in the region's rich Acadian and Franco-American history. The town of Fort Kent has a population of 4,000 and is the primary service center for the region's 10,000 residents. Its Canadian sister town across the river has a population of approximately 1,000. Clair and its neighboring towns comprise Canada's Haut-Madawaska region and have a population of approximately 3,700. Fort Kent's location offers easy access to Canadian cities such as Edmundston (30 minutes, 16,000 residents) and Quebec City (three hours, 550,000 residents).

Fort Kent began as a small military installation during the Aroostook War of the late 1830s. The war was a simmering border dispute between Maine and Canada, in which each side wanted to claim as much of the region's rich timberland as possible, and it ended with a treaty fixing the final border in the middle of the St. John River.

Fort Kent remains closely linked to its Canadian neighbors. French and English are widely spoken throughout the St. John Valley. Outdoor recreation is popular on both sides of the border, with snowmobiling, skiing, snowshoeing, and ice-fishing in the winter and boating, fishing, ATVing, mountain biking, and hiking in the warmer months. The quality of life in Fort Kent is rooted in access to recreation, scenic beauty, diverse housing opportunities, convenient access to services, personal safety, an environment of health and wellness, cultural experiences and resources, and overall affordability of living. The surrounding rural area remains devoted primarily to agriculture, forest production, and recreation.

Maine's spectacular beauty and unmatched outdoor recreational opportunities attract vacationers during all four seasons and ground Mainers in a way of life. The state's 230 miles of coastline with 57 lighthouses, mile-high Mt. Katahdin (the terminus of the Appalachian Trail), and Acadia National Park complement the culturally rich and close-knit community in which the University of Maine at Fort Kent is located.

In the winter, visitors bundle up and enjoy the CanAm Crown Sled Dog Races. The longest of those races – a tough, 250-mile contest – serves as a qualifier for the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race in Alaska. Fort Kent also hosts the Lonesome Pine Trails ski area and the Fort Kent Outdoor Center, which has held two IBU Biathlon World Cup Championships and International Biathlon Paralympic Championships and continues to host many national and international Nordic ski and biathlon events. Each August the community gathers for the annual Ploye Festival and International Muskie Fishing Derby.



## ACADIAN ARCHIVES/ARCHIVES ACADIENNES

The [Acadian Archives/Archives acadiennes](#) at the University of Maine at Fort Kent documents, preserves, celebrates, and disseminates information about the culture, way of life, and history of the Franco-American and Acadian people of the Upper St. John Valley. A repository for manuscript materials and audio-visual documentation relevant to regional folklore, folklife, and history, the Archives serves the University community as well as individuals and organizations regionally, statewide, nationally, and internationally. Services provided by the Archives include outreach presentations, workshops, and on-site reference assistance for the archival collections and for regional history, genealogy, folklore, and folklife.

## THE UNIVERSITY OF MAINE SYSTEM

Established in 1968, the University of Maine System (UMS) is the state's largest educational enterprise. The System comprises [six universities](#)—some with multiple campuses—located across the state, as well as a law school, an additional 31 course sites, and a statewide Cooperative Extension network. UMS has an annual enrollment of nearly 30,000 students and positively impacts the lives of hundreds of thousands of Mainers each year through its educational and cultural offerings as well as outreach and public service to individuals, businesses, organizations and policymakers. The System has an estimated \$1.5 billion total statewide economic impact each year, a return of \$7.50 for every dollar of state appropriation. Two-thirds of its alumni—approximately 120,000 people—live in Maine.

With a total population of only 1,350,000, Maine is the state with the oldest population, creating new demands for services and great challenges for the state's workforce. Over the next 15 years, the number of Mainers in the prime work years of 25–64 years will decline by more than 100,000, or 15 percent, while the total number of high school graduates struggles to exceed 12,000 annually. During that same period, nearly two-thirds of new jobs will require a post-secondary credential or degree. Affordable, accessible, quality public education for all citizens is therefore an essential component of any state plan for economic and social health.

The University of Maine System launched the One University initiative in 2015 to respond to these challenges, as well as to a growing structural budget gap brought on by years of declines in enrollment and state support. One University strives to bring all university resources into focused alignment in support of all Maine families, businesses, and communities, regardless of location. It is driven by a realistic appraisal of Maine's demographic and fiscal realities, as well as an understanding of the highly competitive and rapidly changing landscape for higher education nationally. At the System level, this entails changing planning and operational models from that of a loosely bound confederation of institutions to a highly integrated system. To date, these changes have centered on administrative reform, integration and reduction, as well as increased partnerships and academic collaborations.

UMFK has created pathways to educational opportunity and professional success for rural communities and people by nurturing and engaging students to become diverse learners and aspiring professionals. An important example is Fort Kent's suite of signature [Early College](#) programs, [Rural U](#). High school students across Maine can take UMFK courses through an array of modalities and locations. In Rural U's Workforce Early College Career Explorations Certificates, students earn micro-credentials that can stack towards a degree. Rural U has the added benefit of raising awareness of UMFK among high school students across the state and increasing the likelihood of matriculation at UMFK after high school.

## AFFORDABILITY

The University of Maine System's [nation-leading commitment to affordability](#) is highly visible at UMFK. The University of Maine at Fort Kent has earned numerous accolades from organizations such as The Princeton Review, Washington Monthly, and U.S. World News & Report, which identify UMFK as one of the most affordable universities in the nation. According to a recent report by the [Institute for College Access & Success](#), graduates of UMFK carry the least amount of average education debt upon graduation among graduates of any public college or university in the nation. UMFK's [Bengal Academic Scholarships](#) and [Promise Scholarships](#) and the System's participation in the New England Board of Higher Education's [Tuition Break program](#) all contribute meaningfully to the University's very competitive financial aid packages. The Promise Scholarship program, in particular, effectively ensures that all Pell-eligible, first-year Maine students can attend UMFK without paying out-of-pocket for tuition and standard fees.





## BUDGET AND FINANCES

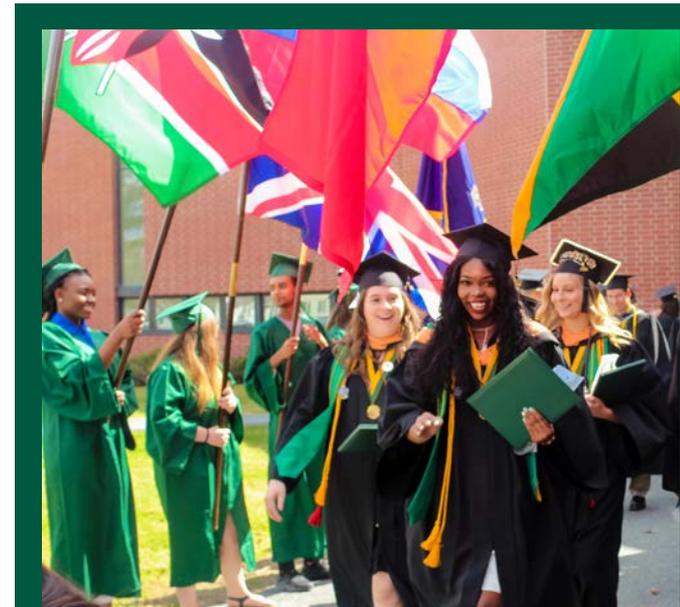
The University of Maine at Fort Kent's FY20 annual unrestricted operating budget, including auxiliaries, is approximately \$16.8 million. This includes \$7.8 million in budgeted unrestricted appropriations from the state. Tuition and fees comprise 43% of total revenue. The University's [Alumni Association](#) and [Foundation](#) organize events and provide important financial support for UMFK. The Foundation's assets exceed \$3 million.

## STUDENTS AND STUDENT LIFE

UMFK's 83 faculty (30 full-time) and 87 staff provide one-on-one support that helps students achieve success, overcome obstacles, and adopt the creative work ethic that is reflective of the reputation of the people of the local communities. Just over 80% of UMFK's students are Mainers, five percent come from other New England states, and ten percent hail from U.S. states outside of New England. International students who comprise five percent of the student body come from 17 different countries. Nearly 700 students from across Maine participate in UMFK's Early College programs that allow them to take UMFK courses at no personal expense while concurrently enrolled in high school.

Residential students can choose between several housing options. Crocker Hall and Powell Hall provide a traditional residential housing experience, while The Lodge's approximately 150 spaces offer apartment-style living. Living on campus maximizes student opportunities for social, cultural, and extracurricular involvement and is positively linked to student persistence toward attaining a degree. First-year students from outside of the area are required to live on campus.

The University has many clubs and organizations that help students develop leadership and communication skills as well as forge friendships



beyond the classroom. Students are also encouraged to develop new clubs or organizations. A sample of the current extracurricular offerings include Behavioral Science Club, Chi Alpha, Computer Science Club, International Student Organization, Kappa Delta Phi National Fraternity, Kappa Delta Phi National Affiliated Sorority, Partners for International Relief, Residence Hall Association, Student Nurses Organization, Spectrum, Student Senate, TRIO Leadership Group, and UMFK & St. John Valley Community Photography Club.

The UMFK women's soccer team is a seven-time United States Collegiate Athletic Association (USCAA) championship team, winning four out of the last five years. The men's soccer team won the USCAA men's national championships in 2015 and 2016. UMFK's athletic prowess extends to its nationally ranked women's volleyball team. In addition, both the men's and women's basketball teams have made multiple trips to national championship tournaments over the last eight years. The University also has a number of intramural sports and activities including 3-on-3 basketball, dodgeball, soccer, and volleyball.



## ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

The University of Maine at Fort Kent's 30 full-time faculty and 53 part-time faculty offer the following baccalaureate majors:

- Arts and Sciences (BAS)
- Behavioral Science (BS)
- Biology (BS)
- Business Management (BS)
- Computer Applications (BS)
- Conservation Law Enforcement (BS)
- Cybersecurity (BS)
- Education (2+2 transition program with UMPI)
- English (BA)
- Environmental Studies (BS)
- Nursing (BSN)
- Rural Public Safety Administration (BS)

**Associate's degrees are also available in General Studies, Allied Health, Applied Forest Management, and Information Security.**

**For the upcoming year, UMFK will test a new academic structure consisting of faculty-selected unit chairs leading various programs who will report to the Dean of Nursing (Nursing and Behavioral Health) and eight other units to a newly created interim Dean position.**

## PRESIDENT AND PROVOST

UMFK's next president will simultaneously hold the portfolio of responsibilities typically overseen by both a president and provost. This change allows UMFK to operate more nimbly, and it follows the successful transition to a president-provost role at UMFK's closest System campus, the University of Maine at Presque Isle (UMPI). The president at UMFK is supported by two academic deans, a chief financial officer, a vice president for enrollment management, a dean of students, a dean of community education, a senior human resources business partner, and a development officer. The vice president for enrollment management and dean of students are positions shared with the UMPI campus and represent the type of collaboration that is increasingly allowing smaller campuses in the System to leverage talent and optimize resources.

The next president will benefit from ongoing collaboration with all of the University of Maine System campus presidents, chief academic officers, and System leadership. Each month the presidents convene for discussions pertaining to their common endeavors, unique challenges, inter-institutional efforts and other System-wide matters. The chief academic officers also meet monthly, for a similar dialogue, and the next UMFK president will participate in both gatherings, given the dual role as the University's chief executive and chief academic officer.

## FACULTY ASSEMBLY

The UMFK Faculty Assembly consists of all eligible full-time and continuing contract faculty who regularly meet as a committee of the whole and participate in the shared governance of UMFK. The Faculty Assembly and its various subcommittees have primary responsibility for curriculum, instructional methods, research, faculty status through peer review, degree requirements, Scholar's Symposium, and those aspects of student life that relate to the educational process. Adjunct, part-time, and fixed-length contract faculty may attend Assembly meetings as observers and commentators, and administrators may speak to the Assembly by invitation.



## FACULTY & STAFF UNIONS

UMFK employees are represented by six collective bargaining agents. The bargaining units are for full-time faculty, part-time faculty, professional and administrative staff, clerical/office/laboratory/technical staff, service and maintenance staff, and police/security staff. Relationships between the unions and UMFK administration are friendly. Collective bargaining for all University of Maine System campuses occurs at the System level.

## UMFK BOARD OF VISITORS

Each of the UMS universities has a Board of Visitors of up to 20 members who are recommended by the campus presidents and confirmed by the Board of Trustees. UMFK's Board of Visitors includes business and civic leaders from across the state, New England, and Canada who are committed to the University's mission and to the educational, economic, and cultural well-being of the region. The Board of Visitors is advisory to the President and senior administration who meet with the full Board four times per year. These regional leaders serve as advocates and advisors for UMFK, review final recommendations on tuition increases and new academic programs, and assist with raising private funds for the University.



# THE ROLE OF THE PRESIDENT

The UMFK president is elected by the Board of Trustees on the nomination of the Chancellor and serves at the pleasure of the Board. The Board consists of 16 members, 15 of whom are appointed by the Governor and approved by the Maine Legislature. The Maine Commissioner of Education serves as a member ex officio. Members are appointed to a five-year term and may be reappointed once. A student member of the Board is appointed to a single two-year term.

Reporting directly to the Chancellor of the University of Maine System, Dannel Malloy, the UMFK president serves as the executive officer, provost, and chief academic leader of UMFK, overseeing all aspects of operations within the approved mission and implementing the policies and procedures set forth by the Chancellor and the Board of Trustees. The president is charged with a set of traditional responsibilities enumerated [here](#) by the Board. The president will advance UMFK's principal mission of excellence in teaching, research, and service; strategic planning; budgeting; philanthropy; faculty and staff development; outreach; and alumni and community relations.



## CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

In addition to providing engaged and creative academic and administrative leadership to the University of Maine at Fort Kent, the next president serves as a member of key leadership groups including the Presidents Council and Provosts Council within the University of Maine System. With inspirational leadership and enthusiasm for the campus, the next president will embrace the following opportunities and challenges:

- **Lead strong, sustainable, diversified, enrollment growth through successful recruitment, retention, and graduation of lifelong learners.**

Articulate broadly the transformative quality and value of a UMFK education to prospective students, but also understand and address the reasons why some students do not make sustained progress in their academic journey. Lead the University in the assessment of UMFK's competitive position and the development of fiscally sound and sustainable academic, enrollment, and administrative business practices in light of the current and projected national higher education environment and state economic and demographic realities. Balance strong programs like Nursing while evaluating programs that have been undersubscribed in recent years. Creatively examine the University's academic portfolio and delivery mechanisms and current market data to ensure their academic relevance, quality, and responsiveness to actual and projected student demand and state workforce needs. Identify focused, strategic investments that offer the University the best potential to generate enrollment growth and improve retention to ensure institutional stability and investments.

- **Ensure sustainable budget planning and execution to achieve a vibrant campus vision.** Adopt a collaborative, highly consultative process for visioning UMFK's future that includes open communication and transparency with a broad range of internal and external stakeholders. Devise and implement a strategic plan that identifies innovative ways to build upon and promote the University's strengths amid the changing educational needs of the state and nation.



- **Foster the culture of helping others that predominates at UMFK.** Nurture this ethos of care through open communication with faculty, staff, students, and community partners. Promote and support a cooperative and collegial academic community. Play an active, engaged, and transparent role among faculty, staff, and students and lead decisively. Understand and respect academic values and shared governance and work through them to effect change. Ask thoughtful questions, listen carefully, shape discourse, be accessible, and support faculty and staff and honor their central and significant contributions to the University.
- **Strengthen and maintain strong, mutually beneficial relationships with the Fort Kent and greater Aroostook County communities as well as with local and state civic, community, and business leaders.** Have a positive, personable, engaging, and highly visible presence on campus and in the community and be prepared by experience and temperament to work closely with the entire community. Model and encourage transparent decision-making to ensure trust and nourish the spirit of mutual respect. Network successfully with outside constituencies, including local community leaders, legislators, and staff, faculty, and administrators across the University of Maine System to strengthen partnerships, both internal and external. Increase collaboration and build upon the strong relationships and partnerships within Fort Kent and the larger region, as well as the nation and the world.
- **Serve as a cooperative, collaborative partner with the presidents of other University of Maine System campuses, University of Maine Presque Isle, in particular, and the Office of the Chancellor.** Support the One University initiative and lead key UMS efforts, including strategic resource allocation planning; academic transformation; and student success. Articulate a clear and compelling vision for UMFK that supports the welfare of the entire system, serves the state's needs, and promotes program and administrative collaboration and integration to expand access, affordability, and impact across the system.



# PREFERRED QUALITIES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

The next president of UMFK must be a highly engaged and collaborative leader with a deep understanding of the evolving challenges facing public higher education at the state and national levels. S/he will be energized by the unique possibilities for leadership presented by the changing landscape in Maine and the importance of UMFK in the region and state. The next president will show confidence, courage, and conviction in leading the University and will possess many of the following qualities and qualifications:

- A collaborative approach to leadership with local stakeholders, the University of Maine System institutions, and the UMS Chancellor's office;
- Inspirational leadership skills that build momentum and encourage others toward action and the pursuit of excellence;
- The ability to develop, articulate, and implement a vision and maintain a sense of direction towards strategic goals;
- A commitment to a comprehensive, student-focused education as well as to the campus's mission of providing students with an academically challenging and intellectually vibrant environment;
- The ability and self-confidence to inspire leadership and make decisions on behalf of an ambitious institution;
- Experience, skill, and energy in developing external support, with a track record of making an effective case for, and successfully attracting new resources to, an institution or program;
- Financial acumen and experience strategically managing budgets;
- An ability to be engaged with and work collaboratively with the community to maintain its strong connection to the institution;
- Emotional intelligence and the ability to ask thoughtful questions, listen carefully, shape discourse, be accessible, and foster a culture of shared governance;
- A commitment to identifying and celebrating the exceptional contributions of faculty, staff, and students while simultaneously motivating individuals and groups to strive for a better future;
- Diplomatic skill and grace when assessing opportunities and communicating outcomes, ensuring that ideas for the future are generated by all members of the campus community and shared with the leadership;
- A deep commitment to transparency and an approachable and engaging style of communication;
- A keen understanding of the issues that institutions like UMFK face and the region's evolving demographics and workforce needs, along with ideas for navigating these trends successfully;
- The ability to lead and manage an organization through a time of cultural change, including the ability to grow and support high-performing teams;
- Integrity, persistence, and a sense of humor; and,
- An appreciation for the University's distinctive, rural location in Northern Maine.

For best consideration, please send all nominations, expressions of interest, and applications electronically and in confidence to:

Jim Sirianni, Partner  
Ruth Shoemaker Wood, Partner  
Mark Halligan, Associate  
Storbeck/Pimentel & Associates, LP  
[UMFKPresident@storbecksearch.com](mailto:UMFKPresident@storbecksearch.com)



For more information, please visit University of Maine at Fort Kent's homepage at <https://www.umfk.edu/>

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