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University of Maine

Joan Ferrini-Mundy

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Update on UMaine and UMM Commencement ceremonies

Dear University of Maine and University of Maine at Machias 2020 graduates and upcoming spring 2021 graduates-to-be — both undergraduates and graduate students.

I hope that all of you are doing well. As we have all witnessed, these past 11 months of the pandemic have taken a toll worldwide. And for each of you, there also is a personal toll. We understand that Commencement serves as the capstone event of your time at UMaine or UMM — a time to celebrate your achievements with family and friends after years of hard work. To those who would have participated in Commencement ceremonies last May, I hope that the Recognition Week we held at UMaine and the virtual Recognition Ceremony at UMM provided some opportunity for you to experience our congratulations and pride in your accomplishments. We also recognize and understand the significance of participating in an in-person Commencement ceremony.

And, to those whose graduation is coming up in May 2021, we know that the uncertainty of everything, including this semester and what circumstances will be like in May, adds a layer of stress and anxiety as you prepare to conclude your degree work in the coming weeks. You will have experienced as much as three semesters of your college career in pandemic modes, requiring major adjustments in everything from what it means to take a class, to where and how you will live, to personal and family challenges.

In September, we noted our intention to honor both our 2020 and 2021 graduates with in-person Commencement ceremonies this spring if health and safety guidance allows. But since then, as the pandemic has unfolded and continues here in Maine and beyond, it has become clear that we will not be able to safely gather for these celebrations in the way we had hoped. And I share your disappointment.

On both campuses, Commencement Committees are now planning virtual ceremonies to honor and recognize the hard work, dedication, achievements and perseverance of our UMaine and UMM undergraduate and graduate students during this particularly challenging time. We want to hear from you as that planning continues. On the Commencement websites, you can share your ideas and suggestions for what we can do, under the conditions we all face for observing safety and health protocols, to make your Commencement recognition as memorable and meaningful as we can possibly manage. As updates become available, we will post them on the UMaine Commencement [website](#) and UMM Commencement [website](#).

Thank you for your understanding and congratulations on your achievements. I look forward to hearing your ideas and to congratulating each of you in some way this May.

Sincerely,

Joan Ferrini-Mundy
 President



[Suggestion Form](#)



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