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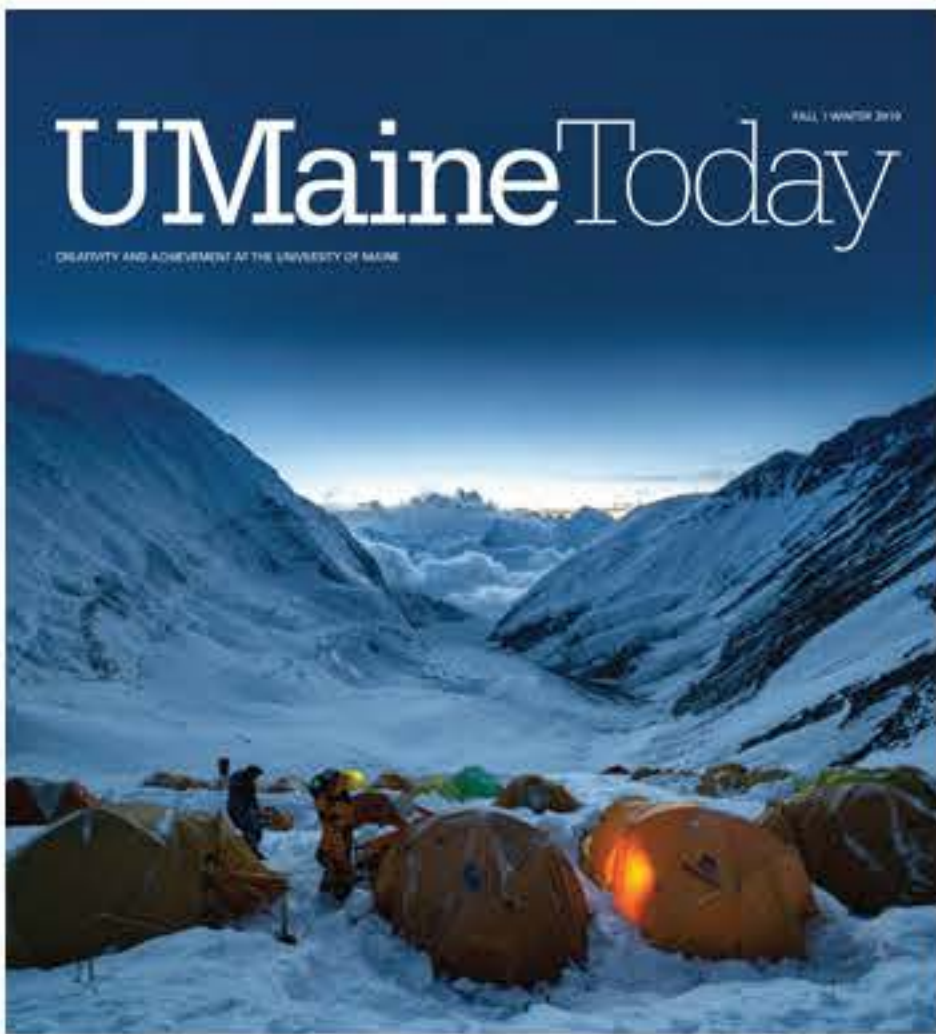
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April 15, 2020

The [Times Record](#) spoke with James McConnon, University of Maine Cooperative Extension business and economics specialist and professor in the School of Economics, for the article "Unfortunate timing, virus waylay new Bath restaurant's plans." Sourasay Senesombath was hoping to open Asian Noodle House, his fourth restaurant, in Bath in early May, but the COVID-19 outbreak has presented several roadblocks. McConnon said this is an especially hard time for nearly all businesses because demand and consumer spending has plummeted. New restaurants are in a particularly hard situation because consumers don't know the business yet, the article states. "Existing businesses have a customer base and with restaurants, loyalty and repeat customers are a big factor," he said. "Like any new business, costs are going to be higher in the beginning too because it takes time to make more and more consumers aware and generate revenue." McConnon said businesses, especially new restaurants, should focus on boosting revenue while reducing costs by creating a limited menu and maintaining a strong social media presence so the public knows about the new business. "Especially during a time like this, any business needs to focus on profitability first and foremost," said McConnon. The [Bangor Daily News](#) interviewed McConnon for the article "Economists paint 'dire' picture for Maine in potentially long coronavirus recession." McConnon said current unemployment numbers "are extremely high and troubling, and the impact that has on consumer spending is likely to continue to impact other sectors of the economy and in turn have additional impacts on employment."

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