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Matthew Revitt <matthew.revitt@maine.edu>

Maine Memo — March 11

1 message

UMaine President's Office <umaine.president@maine.edu>
Reply-To: UMaine President's Office <umaine.president@maine.edu>
To: UM-EMPLOYEES@lists.maine.edu

Thu, Mar 11, 2021 at 1:45 PM



MAINE MEMO



From Joan Ferrini-Mundy

President of the University of Maine and the University of Maine at Machias

Today is one year from the day that the University of Maine System announced a dramatic change to transition all classes to online instruction and to vacate campus residence halls, marking the beginning of an unprecedented transformation in higher education in our state, consistent with transformations around the world because of a global pandemic. And today is the first meeting of the President's Commission on Excellence and Equity at the University of Maine (UMaine 2025), announced in my [State of the University Address](#) last month.

This group, co-chaired by Kirsten Jacobson, chair and professor, Department of Philosophy, and alumnus Matthew Rodrigue, co-head and managing director of Miller Buckfire and member of the UMaine Board of Visitors, is charged with planning now, in visionary ways, to better serve our students, our community, and our state as higher education evolves in the face of convergent crises.

Public higher education faces extraordinary challenges: the COVID-19 pandemic, renewed calls for racial justice and equity, the threats of climate change and an emerging need to prioritize civic education. There is no "returning to" a normal identical to pre-pandemic times. The events of 2020 are having deep and transformative impacts on our world and changing the context for higher education.

The ways in which we prepare our students for tomorrow, including those beginning their UMaine journey in 2021 and graduating in 2025, must acknowledge the world they are experiencing and shaping.

I have charged the 25-member President's Commission on Excellence and Equity at the University of Maine 2025 to meet over the next six months and produce a dynamic vision of UMaine as a student-centric, research focused, diverse and inclusive institution that serves as a resource for the community, a thought leader in the state and region, and a proactive force in shaping the evolving needs and demands of our society.

The commission's first meeting is today, and we look forward to its recommendations on the innovative work, directions and collective activities that we need to undertake that will, ultimately, define us in our pursuit of excellence and equity in public higher education. UMaine 2025 is key to moving beyond recovery and restoration to ambitious

and forward-thinking strategies that position the University of Maine as the relevant leader it is and must continue to be in the University of Maine System, the state and beyond, leaning in with inclusion, innovation and creativity at its core.

Updates and resource materials to share with the community will soon be available online. Until then, please join me in welcoming the UMaine 2025 commissioners:

Kirsten Jacobson, chair and professor, Department of Philosophy; Matthew Rodrigue, co-head and managing director of Miller Buckfire; Pank Agrawal, professor of finance; Sven Bartholomew, senior vice president, Camden National Bank; Cat Biddle, associate professor of educational leadership; Jen Bonnet, social sciences and humanities librarian, Fogler Library; Andra Bowen, director of Residence Life; Cheryl Coffin, professor emerita, Vanderbilt University; Susan Corbett, founder and director, Dignity Equity Center; Edniesha Curry, assistant coach, Men's Basketball; Habib Dagher, executive director, Advanced Structures and Composites Center; Sandra De Urioste-Stone, associate professor, School of Forest Resources; Rob Dumas, coordinator of food science innovation and facility manager, School of Food and Agriculture; Jean George, general partner, Advanced Technology Ventures/Lightstone Ventures; Nicholas Giudice, founder, chief research scientist and professor, VEMI Lab; Caitlin Howell, assistant professor of biomedical engineering; Gregory Johnson, retired U.S. Navy admiral; Marcus LiBrizzi, professor of English, UMM; Lateef O'Connor, senior associate director of Admissions; Angela Okafor, Bangor City councilor, attorney and business owner; Scott Oxley, president, Northern Light Acadia Hospital; Hannah Pingree, director, Governor's Office of Policy Innovation and the Future; Darren Ranco, chair of Native American Programs, coordinator of Native American research and associate professor of anthropology; Jasmine Saros, associate director of the Climate Change Institute, director of Sawyer Water Research Laboratory and professor, School of Biology and Ecology; and Dianne Tilton, executive director, Downeast Institute.

For more information, contact UMaine 2025 staff members Jason Charland, senior advisor to the President and director of research development, jason.charland@maine.edu; or UMaine 2025 Project Director, Grace Garland, grace.garland@maine.edu.