Harold Alfond Foundation is bringing people together to bring transformative change to the University of Maine System and shape Maine's new century

Office of the President, University of Maine
The Harold Alfond Foundation is bringing people together to bring transformative change to the University of Maine System and shape Maine’s new century.

Stay connected to the investments and innovation resulting from the historic $240 million commitment the Harold Alfond Foundation has made to Maine and its public universities.

The Harold Alfond Foundation’s historic investment in Maine and its people includes a $240 million commitment to the University of Maine System to bring transformative change to the state’s largest educational, research, innovation and talent development asset.

The grant is both a gift and a challenge that inspires everyone who believes in the transformative power of education to come together and do more. We will proceed with a commitment to inclusion that makes sure that no one is left behind.

UMS Transforms means: More for the University of Maine System’s students and a reshaping of national thinking on how to engage learners in a new age. Elements include:

- Research learning: Entering students will be introduced to discovery with research learning early in their college careers;
- Gateway courses: Proven approaches to learning assistance and curricular redesign will improve results and retention through gateway STEM courses; and
- Pathways to career: Expand access to credit-bearing internships and experiential learning will strengthen pathways to careers.

UMS Transforms means: More solutions for our workforce and employers, including a new Maine College of Engineering, Computing and Information Science that will become a statewide, integrated solution to providing the technical workforce and innovations that are critical to moving Maine’s economy forward.
UMS Transforms means: More real-world relevance and cross-disciplinary learning and connections through the University of Maine Graduate & Professional Center. With focused coordination we will build a global brand and reach for our graduate business, law, health and public policy programs. These programs will come together in a new state-of-the-art building in Portland and strengthen connections to Maine and its higher education community.

UMS Transforms means: A new chapter in UMaine Black Bear Athletics and the opportunity to build a stronger, more inclusive community. This includes state-of-the-art facilities, venues and stadiums that keep with Harold Alfond’s leadership and legacy of support for education and athletics.

UMS Transforms means: A place for everyone who believes education is our highest and best hope to change lives and shape a better, more inclusive future. We are counting on leadership, engagement and ideas from across the university community and from the students and stakeholders we proudly serve.

Together we can be transformative.

$75 million investment from Harold Alfond Foundation

News citations

MORE

MORE
Four focus areas

$75 million for a multi-university Maine College of Engineering, Computing and Information Science to be cooperatively led by the University of Maine — Providing additional undergraduate engineering programs at the University of Southern Maine, UMaine graduate engineering programs offered in Portland, expanded pathways into the statewide college from all UMS universities, new opportunities for shared programs, interdisciplinary structures and partnerships, and further renovations to UMaine’s engineering education infrastructure.

Learn more
- University of Maine College of Engineering
- Maine Engineering Pathways Program
- University of Maine School of Computing and Information Science

$90 million for athletic facilities at the University of Maine and the well-being of Maine people — Providing support to maintain excellence in the state’s only Division I athletics program, advance gender equity, and provide a preferred destination for high school sports championships, large academic fairs and competitions, and community events. All of the university’s students and people from throughout Maine will be able to use the state-of-the-art athletic and convening venues at the state’s flagship university in Orono.

Learn more
- University of Maine Department of Athletics

$20 million for student success and retention — Funding for three programs to be piloted at UMaine and expanded across the University of Maine System that include research learning opportunities for first- and second-year undergraduate students, a gateways to success initiative to
expand learning assistance and curricular redesign to reduce failure rates and improve retention in “gateway” STEM courses, and a pathways-to-careers program to expand access to credit-bearing internships and other experiential learning opportunities Systemwide.

Learn more

- University of Maine First-Year Student Success Initiative
- University of Maine Strategic Vision and Values: A Framework for the University’s Future
- University of Maine System Research and Development Plan
- Center for Undergraduate Research
- Career Center
- Experiential Programs Innovation Central

$55 million for the University of Maine Graduate & Professional Center — Supporting scholarships; building faculty expertise; developing interdisciplinary graduate programs across business, law, policy, public health, computing, information science, and engineering; and constructing a state-of-the-art building on the University of Southern Maine’s Portland campus to house Maine Center programs and Maine Law. This building will serve as a hub for academic collaboration and engagement with the Maine employer community to help attract talent to the state and strengthen Maine’s economy.

- Maine Center homepage
- University of Maine Graduate School of Business
- University of Southern Maine’s Muskie School of Public Service
- University of Maine School of Law
Maine College of Engineering, Computing, and Information Science

The Maine College of Engineering, Computing, and Information Science (MCECIS) is one of the four initiatives of the Harold Alfond Foundation UMS: Transforms Grant. MCECIS is proposed to be a “statewide, integrated solution to providing the technical workforce and innovations that are critical to moving Maine’s economy forward.”

MCECIS will provide additional undergraduate engineering programs at the University of Southern Maine, UMaine graduate engineering programs offered in Portland, expanded pathways into the statewide college from all University of Maine System universities, and new opportunities for shared programs, interdisciplinary structures and partnerships.

Visioning Session

This initiative is in the early stages of development. Recently, a visioning session was held. The goal of the session was to seek broad input from industry, practicing technical professionals, community, and educators. Over 200 members of industry and education participated in the virtual session Jan. 21. Below are selected segments from the kickoff session.

Maine Governor Janet Mills  
Harold Alfond Foundation President & CEO Greg Powell  
University of Maine System Chancellor Dannel Malloy
Employment in Maine

Supp l y and d emand compar i son

The need for gradu at es of Maine un ivers it ies h as n eve r b ee n hi g h er.
Current ly t h e r e are mo r e e n g in ee r in g a n d co mp ut in g jobs ava il ab le t han
there are gradu at es.

From 2006 t o 2019, Maine has seen a dra ma tic in crea se in the nu m b e r of
available engineering and computing positions. The strong growth has seen
over 5,000 new positions created in the two fields.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Profession</th>
<th>Maine Number of Starter Jobs*</th>
<th>Maine Degree Conferrals 2019</th>
<th>Maine Ratio Jobs/Degrees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Civil engineer</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electrical engineer</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land surveyor</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer support specialist</td>
<td>325</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>System analyst</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*0-2 years experience; last 12 months. Source: Burning Glass Labor Insight

The next generation of Maine's workforce

Maine currently has one of the oldest populations in the country. What this
means is that as the current workforce begins to retire, they will leave
behind a large gap in the workforce. In the next 10 years, Maine will need
to replace 4,000 engineering and computing jobs. MCECIS plans to meet
that demand head on by increasing the number of industry leading
graduates.

The state is not only looking toward job replacement, it also is looking
toward job growth. As Maine's economy continues to grow, the expected
need for graduates in the next 10 years is expected to reach up to 5,000
new engineering and computing jobs.

Supply and demand comparison

The need for graduates of Maine universities has never been higher.
Currently there are more engineering and computing jobs available than
there are graduates.

From 2006 to 2019, Maine has seen a dramatic increase in the number of
available engineering and computing positions. The strong growth has seen
over 5,000 new positions created in the two fields.
Building the future

The initiative also will include renovations to UMaine’s engineering education infrastructure in addition to the new Fernald Engineering Education and Design Center in Orono, slated for completion in summer 2022.

The E. James and Eileen P. Ferland Engineering Education and Design Center (FEEDC) is a multi-use academic and laboratory building destined to become the heart of undergraduate engineering education at the University of Maine. This three-story, 107,000-square-foot state-of-the-art facility will help meet Maine’s engineering workforce needs and address increased enrollment demands for UMaine’s engineering programs.
The Harold Alfond Foundation’s historic investment in Maine and its people includes a $240 million commitment to the University of Maine System to bring transformative change to the state’s largest educational, research, innovation and talent development asset.

Of that, $90 million will be used for athletic facilities at the University of Maine and the well-being of Maine people, providing support to maintain excellence in the state’s only Division I athletics program, strengthen gender equity, and provide a preferred destination for high school sports championships, large academic fairs and competitions, and community events. All of the university’s students and people from throughout Maine will be able to use the state-of-the-art athletic and convening venues at the state’s flagship university in Orono.
To see details and more images of each specific facility project, please click on the individual images below.
Student Success and Retention

The transformative power of education to shape lives and create opportunity across generations starts with the success of a single student.

The Harold Alfond Foundation grant provides $20 million for student support initiatives and challenges the University of Maine System to leverage $25 million more to establish a student success culture and programs that improve outcomes through connection and engagement.

For the University of Maine System, we believe every student will have the opportunity to pursue their dream, to shape their identity and sense of purpose through education that prepares them to understand and contribute to the solutions needed for the 21st century. Post secondary education, once one of the paths to a successful work life, is now requisite for most new, value-added jobs and the chance to have an impact within a community and across a career.

The growing opportunity divide is leaving too many behind, contributing to workforce challenges, and personal economic uncertainty.

We believe that public higher education must lead the way in bridging this gap, devoting its resources and reach to providing everyone with the credentials, skills, and access to lifelong learning required to advance careers and seize new opportunities.

At the University of Maine System we obligate ourselves to and center our culture on the success and retention of our students through graduation and into meaningful careers – or as President Clayton Spencer at Bates College would say, “purposeful work.” Making the learning and success of our students our primary focus and determining how to assess it will reshape national thinking on how higher education can engage students, starting where they are, with the educational access, flexibility, support, and relevance they need to succeed.

The UMS Transforms Student Success and Retention initiative is led by University of Maine Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost John Volin and University of Maine at Fort Kent President Deborah Hedeen. Its work will be done across three campus-engaged working groups focused on the following:

1. Research learning experiences that introduce students to discovery and knowledge creation early in their college careers;
2. Redesigning curriculum of gateway STEM courses and engaging proven approaches to learning to help students succeed in courses that have traditionally been a barrier to academic progress; and,
3. Reaching new levels of relevance between the educational experience and career success with a new

Highlights

Nargiz Ali Zada: MBA program draws Azerbaijani financer to UMaine

The Roys: Three brothers, one MBA Program

Claudia Desjardins: Hands-on lab experience benefits human health in pandemic

Internship Stories: Maria Maxsimic at Marley Lilly

Internship Stories: Connor Williams at Tyler Technologies

Internship Stories: Maggie Healy at UMaine ASCC

Internship Stories: Tate Porter at Unum
pathways to careers program that expands access to credit-bearing internships with employer partners and experiential learning.

Each working group will be tasked with addressing best practices, cultural change, authentic and inclusive learning, advising and mentoring, and assessment.

The UMS Transforms website will provide updates on the progress being made across the working groups and these five core areas and invite community engagement with the working groups and their work. An introduction of the groups and work plans will occur as part of a UMS Transforms Convention in the spring of 2021.
WE’VE GOT BIG NEWS!

A historic investment by the Harold Alfond Foundation

The University of Maine Graduate & Professional Center is honored to be a part of the historic $240 million grant investment in Maine's public higher education system, announced on October 6th by the Harold Alfond Foundation. This investment in the University of Maine System is the 8th largest gift ever made to a U.S. public institution of higher education and the largest ever to a public institution of higher education in New England. The transformative $55 million grant specifically made to the Maine Center will enable us to deliver on the vision to prepare leaders to solve the state's most pressing challenges and chart a new future for Maine's workforce and Maine's economy.

Read the full press release

ABOUT THE MAINE CENTER

Located in Portland but serving students and employers statewide, the University of Maine Graduate & Professional Center brings together programs in law, business, policy, and public health to train the workforce of the future and grow Maine's economy. The Maine Center and its affiliated programs develop cross-disciplinary, experiential, and market-driven programming for graduate students in its focus.

Subscribe to our monthly newsletter
disciplines. We also deliver programming tailored to the evolving needs of Maine’s civic, non-profit, business, and legal communities.

GRADUATE PROGRAMS

LAW

BUSINESS

POLICY & PUBLIC HEALTH

EVENTS

INSPIRED INNOVATORS SERIES

Stakeholder Capitalism: Reinventing Business to Both Serve & Succeed

November 19, 9-10am

with Neil Kiely, CEO of Androscoggin Bank

Presented by

INSPIRED INNOVATORS: HOW TO’S FOR FAMILY BUSINESS: SUCCESSION PLANNING

Learn More

INSPIRED INNOVATORS: 2020 JUDGE COFFIN LECTURE: CHALLENGING IMMIGRATION POLICIES

Learn More

All events
This summer, thousands of summer internships across the country were cancelled due to COVID-19. Thanks to an anonymous donor, things looked a little different here in Maine. 23 graduate students pursuing advanced degrees in law, business, policy, planning, management, and public health became the inaugural cohort of the Maine Center Graduate Internship Program.

Meet our graduate interns

The Greater Good podcast

“The Greater Good” explores complex and emerging issues in law, business, and public policy. The podcast features Maine Center-affiliated students, alumni, faculty, and outside guests. Episode topics include information privacy, rural health, immigration law, regulatory compliance, and more. Visit our podcast page to learn more about this project and listen to the episodes.

Listen to the podcast
Our community responds

University of Maine System leaders respond to the Harold Alfond Foundation investment

- University of Maine System Chancellor Dannel Malloy
- University of Maine System Board of Trustees Chair James Erwin
- University of Maine President Joan Ferrini-Mundy
- University of Southern Maine President Glenn Cummings
- University of Maine School of Law Dean Leigh Saufley
- University of Maine Athletic Director Ken Ralph

University of Maine System Chancellor Dannel Malloy

Maine is receiving a transformative, unprecedented investment in its people and its future from the Harold Alfond Foundation. And it comes at a time when we need optimism and an affirmation that we work best when we work together. Through the work to achieve unified accreditation for our universities and, more recently, to bring our students back to Maine in one of the safest fall reopenings in the country, we have remained focused on both the success, and public health and safety of our students, faculty and staff, and the Maine communities where they learn, teach and engage in research.

We are extremely grateful for the Harold Alfond Foundation’s commitment to Maine’s public universities. We’re ready to use these generous investments and the matching dollars they leverage to transform our academic collaborations and facilities, provide resources to faculty for development and innovation, support student success and provide scholarships, and work with state and global partners to accelerate workforce and economic opportunities for Maine. All of this honors the Harold Alfond Foundation’s 70-year legacy of service and generosity.

University of Maine System Board of Trustees Chair James Erwin

The Board of Trustees is incredibly appreciative of the Harold Alfond Foundation’s support for and confidence in the steps we have taken to provide Maine’s public universities with the leadership and strategic direction necessary for them to become accessible, affordable, and responsive 21st-century leaders in education, research and workforce development. Given the right educational and experiential learning opportunities, Maine students and workers can compete with anyone in the world. With the Alfond Foundation’s historic partnership, we have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to become the high-performing statewide institution of public higher education Maine families, employers and community leaders need to overcome the state’s demographic and skills-gap
University of Maine School of Law Dean Leigh Sausley

On behalf of the students — current and future — of Maine Law and the Graduate and Professional Center, we send our deepest gratitude to the Harold Alfond Foundation, not just for the extraordinary generosity demonstrated through this transformative grant, but also for the vision and support for collaborative and cross-disciplinary education. The interplay of business, law, science, engineering, and policy has never been more important in Maine and this country. The work already made possible through prior generosity of the Foundation has demonstrated the critical importance of educating the next generation of Maine's business leaders, lawyers, policy makers, scientists and engineers across multiple disciplines, and this extraordinary gift will advance the reframing of graduate education in a way that will add immense value to Maine for generations to come.

University of Maine Athletic Director Ken Ralph

Words cannot adequately convey our appreciation for the generosity of the Harold Alfond Foundation. This gift to the University of Maine System and to Black Bear Athletics once again shows how the Board of the Harold Alfond Foundation continues to honor Mr. Alfond's passion for excellence in education and athletics. This grant will allow us to upgrade our facilities to improve the competitiveness of our Division I teams, advance our stated commitment to gender equity in our athletics programs, as well as create a destination for youth club programs and high school championship level events, cementing Orono as the premier destination in Maine for sports while providing opportunities for our students to excel in the skill of competition.

The Harold Alfond Foundation has our community's deepest gratitude for this historic gift to Maine's flagship university, to the entire University of Maine System and to the University of Southern Maine.

The Foundation's commitment will have a transformative and lasting impact on Maine students. The gift will allow our universities to add even greater value to our state's workforce and will strengthen our graduates' contributions to their communities. It's especially wonderful to see the Foundation's commitment to build new facilities for the Maine Graduate and Professional Center on USM's Portland Campus and provide USM students with expanded scholarships. The Foundation's investment will strengthen the Center's ability to marshal programs in law, business, policy and public health to grow Maine's economy. We will all gain from the Center's ongoing service to Maine's businesses and civic, legal and nonprofit organizations.

On behalf of the USM community, I thank the Harold Alfond Foundation for their confidence in our ability to realize the full potential of their investment and the magnitude of their generosity.

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drawing countless youth to our campus to enjoy the thrill of competing.

This grant will allow us to build out some new facilities and upgrade existing facilities. The full execution of our plan will positively impact all 17 of our varsity programs while also providing better facilities for our on-campus recreational sports. The spectator experience will also be enhanced so people can more easily make the decision to come to campus to cheer on their Black Bears.

Since the mid-’70s when Harold Alfond made a gift which would become Alfond Arena, the Alfond family has positively impacted generations of athletes in Orono. This new grant will allow us to enhance the Alfond legacy with the University of Maine and the Black Bears. We are humbled by the generosity shown by the Harold Alfond Foundation and will work hard every day to live up to the expectations Harold Alfond had for the university and its athletic department.
UMS Transforms updates

Multiple media outlets report on new UMaine athletic facilities, excitement among coaches
Published: February 18, 2021

UMaine pursues transformative $110M athletic facilities plan
Published: February 17, 2021

Installation of final beam, time capsule highlight UMaine Ferland Engineering Education and Design Center ceremony
Published: February 11, 2021

University of Maine System launches planning for statewide College of Engineering, Computing, and Information Science backed by $75 million investment from Harold Alfond Foundation
Published: January 22, 2021

UMaine launches graduate program in data science and engineering
Published: January 13, 2021

Leadership

Executive Leadership Group

Dannel Malloy
Executive Chair

Joan Ferrini-Mundy
Co-Principal Investigator

Jim Thelen
Co-Principal Investigator

Kimberly Whitehead
Project Director

Ryan Low
Financial Director

Student success and retention
Brief overview of UMaine funding from Harold Alfond and the Harold Alfond Foundation

- Since 1986, the Alfond Foundation has awarded $18 million in gifts and pledges to UMaine.

- Alfond Arena, Alfond Stadium, Alfond W2 Ocean Engineering Lab, and Alfond Advanced Manufacturing Lab for Structural Thermoplastics are named in honor of Harold Alfond and the support of the Harold Alfond Foundation.

- Harold Alfond himself gave $3.8 million to UMaine, beginning with his $500,000 gift for Alfond Arena.

- The vision and leadership of Harold Alfond and the Harold Alfond Foundation have transformed the University of Maine campus and its statewide mission as Maine’s land grant university. UMaine is the state’s only public research university and NCAA Division I athletics program. Over many years, investments by Harold Alfond and the Harold Alfond Foundation have strengthened those distinctions to benefit Maine and beyond.

- Generous capital investments and operating support in UMaine athletics, particularly the football and men’s ice hockey programs, have had a major impact. Harold Alfond Sports Arena and Harold Alfond Stadium are preeminent facilities on campus, serving student-athletes and Black Bear Nation fans, and countless numbers of community members. Most recently, the Alfond Fund launched a new chapter in Black Bear annual fundraising.

- Harold Alfond Foundation investments also made history with the establishment of the prestigious Stephen E. King Chair in Literature in honor of UMaine’s preeminent alumnus.

- Harold Alfond Foundation investments in UMaine innovation and research include significant contributions to establish the Alfond W2 Ocean Engineering Lab and the Alfond Advanced Manufacturing Lab for Structural Thermoplastics, both at the internationally recognized Advanced Structures and Composites Center. Both laboratories support cutting-edge research and provide hands-on educational opportunities for tomorrow’s workforce.

- A challenge grant to the University of Maine System established the new Portland-based University of Maine Graduate and Professional Center, which brings together programs in law, business, policy, and public health to train the workforce of the future and grow Maine's economy. This center is critical to offering UMaine’s nationally recognized MBA degree.
The Harold Alfond Foundation created a leadership endowment fund in the University of Maine System to enable the University of Maine to compete nationally for a top-tier president and to help incentivize a long-term commitment to the state.