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Unified Research and Strategic Initiatives and Data

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Unified Research and Strategic Initiatives and Data

1 message

Maine's Public Universities <chancellorsoffice@maine.edu>
Reply-To: chancellorsoffice@maine.edu

Wed, Mar 3, 2021 at 8:52 AM



March 3, 2021



Colleagues,

Later this morning, I will be announcing that UMaine President Joan Ferrini-Mundy will be leading an effort to unify support for research initiatives throughout the University of Maine System. I also will be updating existing roles in my office to prioritize strategic initiatives and data-driven decision-making without adding additional staff to our team.

I wanted to make sure you learned of these changes from me before our public announcement.



The FY 2020 MEIF report being shared with the Board of Trustees today details how \$17.35 million in coordinated state research investment leveraged \$92.4 million in federal and private-sector grants and contracts in our universities. No matter how you analyze the data, it's good news for Maine: a 5.3 to 1 leverage ratio, a 21% increase in investment over last year, and support for more than 575 faculty and staff positions, and over 1,221 students working on MEIF-funded projects.

It is my judgment that we could be more powerful and influential as a System if we provided all of our faculty, researchers, and programs with access to the globally renowned research stature we have at the University of Maine. To achieve that end, I have asked Joan Ferrini-Mundy to accept the additional title of Vice Chancellor for Research and Innovation for the University of Maine System. She'll continue as the president of our flagship university.

UMaine's research stature is growing, with the goal of achieving Carnegie R1 status as soon as possible, but too little attention is paid to how research is supported, encouraged, and coordinated across the System. And now, with unified accreditation, the New England Commission on Higher Education asked in its July 17, 2020 letter that we report in our self-study on our plan for strengthening the funding model for research and increasing research funding and doctoral-level education at the University of Maine.

Although some of our institutions have some specialized research and development infrastructure, the University of Maine as the flagship has a robust and comprehensive infrastructure that already serves institutions across the System. Intentional coordination and support beyond the flagship for research and graduate work happening at

our universities will drive growth in Maine's economy and the development of a talented workforce prepared for the R&D environment.

Research-oriented faculty at our smaller universities (such as Tora Johnson at UMM, Con Sullivan at UMA, Gina Oswald at UMF, Ned Rubert-Nason at UMFk, or Jason Johnston at UMPI, and many others) may benefit from better support and connection to the flagship's research enterprise. In a time of limited resources and unified accreditation, rather than standing up additional parallel research infrastructure anywhere else in the System, we need to coordinate across institutions and ensure that the UMaine infrastructure is accessible and supportive to all.

I am also asking my Chief of Staff and General Counsel James Thelen to accept the title of Vice Chancellor for Strategic Initiatives and Chief Legal Officer for the University of Maine System. The new title reflects the work Jim does to lead Board and System leadership initiatives, including Unified Accreditation and, along with President Ferrini-Mundy, UMS TRANSFORMS, the collection of initiatives funded by the Harold Alfond Foundation's \$240 million commitment to the University of Maine System. Jim will continue to function as my Chief of Staff and also take on oversight of UMS Human Resources.

Vice Chancellor of Finance and Administration Ryan Low will take on oversight of our government relations function that is managed so ably by Samantha Warren.

I'm also updating the job description for Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Robert Placido to better reflect the data focus and analysis he leads for the System in that position. Our System is the state's largest and most important education and workforce development resource, and Robert is charged with providing us with actionable data to help us set our academic priorities, transparently assess performance and make informed decisions.

Throughout the last year, we have proven that our ideals, inspiration, and hard work go further when we are unified as a university community. We are changing titles and updating roles but not adding positions to the System office, knowing we have to act more strategically together with the resources, and people we already have.

With your help and the support of collaborative leadership across the System I know we can have a meaningful impact on our students and state.

Sincerely,



Dannel P. Malloy
Chancellor

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