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Injury Prevention Grand Challenge Seed Grant Awardees announced

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Injury Prevention Grand Challenge Seed Grant Awardees announced

March 26, 2021

The University of Maine System Rural Health and Well-being Grand Challenge Initiative's Injury Prevention Collaborative recently held a seed grant competition for UMS researchers. The program is coordinated by Marcella Sorg and Jamie Wren at the University of Maine Margaret Chase Smith Policy Center, with assistance from UMaine's Office of Research Development.

The UMS Injury Prevention Collaborative coordinates current system resources related to rural injury and violence prevention for better collaboration, more robust applications for external funding, greater opportunities for students, and greater impact on the safety and well-being of Mainers.

The seed grant program is intended to cultivate multiple injury prevention projects in preparation for a future and large-scale U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Injury Control Research Center proposal submission.

A total of five projects were selected for funding and involve intercampus collaborative research teams within UMS. The projects include:

- "Addressing Structural Barriers to Injury Prevention among Shellfish and Lobster Harvesters," led by principal investigator Tora Johnson from the University of Maine at Machias. The project involves a multidisciplinary team that includes Lois-Ann Kuntz from UMM, Linda Silka and Bridie McGreavy from UMaine, Debra Kantor from University of Maine Cooperative Extension and Kate Darling from the University of Maine at Augusta.
- "Violence Prevention in Rural Maine: A Pilot Project for the Early Identification of Severe Mental Illness in Washington County," led by principal investigator Jeffrey Hecker from UMaine and Co-PI Kuntz from UMM. The project involves a close collaboration with Northern Light Acadia Hospital and a partnership with the Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) Schizophrenia Clinical & Research Program.
- "3D Printing Low-cost and High-efficiency Air Filter for COVID-19 Virus," led by principal investigator Yingchao Yang from UMaine and Co-PIs Ling Li, also from UMaine, and Larry Feinstein from the University of Maine at Presque Isle. The project will explore novel wood fiber printing processes for virus filtration purposes.
- "An Intelligent Hybrid Biomechanical-Environmental Method to Predict Falls Pre-Impact," led by principal investigator Babak Hejrati from UMaine in collaboration with Co-PIs Ali Abedi, Vincent Caccese and Ali Shirazi from UMaine, and Bernadette Kroon from the University of Southern Maine.
- "UMPI Career Readiness and Employer U," which is led by UMPI Director of Career Readiness Nicole Fournier and UMPI assistant professor of business administration Kim Jones. This program will bring students directly into the research enterprise as they survey employers about training needs and gaps in the areas of mental health and wellbeing.

Learn more about the UMS Grand Challenge Pilot Initiative Launch on the [Research and Development Plan website](#).

For questions about the projects, contact Iason Charland, senior advisor to the president and



director of research development at UMaine, at jason.charland@maine.edu.

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