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Robert A. Kennedy
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Lord Hall Dedication

May 5, 2006

Robert A. Kennedy, President, University of Maine

Thank you, Stephanie, for that nice introduction. We are delighted to have you back in Maine again. It is a sure sign that spring is upon us!

This is a proud and special day for the University of Maine.

The dedication of this magnificently renovated building represents a true milestone in UMaine's proud heritage of creating and celebrating art in ways unmatched by any other institution in this state.

Lord Hall symbolizes much of what the University of Maine is all about.

it stands proud and strong, now better than ever, as a place where people can gain an appreciation for the things that make us better as a society and as a culture.

As UMaine's president, I am so thankful for the leadership of many people who have made today possible. In particular, I would like to thank Hannah Whalen, from the Office of University Development, Val Williams from University Relations, and Jim Linehan, Chair of the Art Department, for their work related to today's event. Jim has provided exceptional and patient leadership for this project, and I am most grateful to him for this.

I understand that Frances Hartgen is with us today, too, and without the Hartgens, it seems unlikely that we would be standing where we are today. Vincent's legacy on campus will never be forgotten or underestimated. With this in mind, I would like to thank Frances for her unique and vital role in the visual arts on our campus.

A university is a place where creativity – in its many forms – is celebrated.

Whether it's a scientist in the lab, a student writer at a computer keyboard, a pre-service teacher working with young children, or a painter at an easel, people who are part of a university community can rejoice in the knowledge that they are in a place where imagination is nurtured and appreciated.

By creating art, as those who will work and study in this building do so beautifully, UMaine's professors and students and others are making the world a better place.

They can, and they should, take great satisfaction in the knowledge that the people of the State of Maine, and certainly all of us at the University of Maine, support them in that endeavor.

In addition to its historic significance and its intrinsic beauty, Lord Hall is also in the ideal home for the Department of Art.

Consider the symbolism of the Mall, with the library at one end and the gym

at the other--representing the notion of developing the mind and the body.

It is truly fitting that the building representing the visual arts should also be on the Mall, the symbolic heart of our campus.

At the same time, this adds to sort of a cultural corridor, including the Maine Center for the Arts and Hudson Museum, Class of 1944 Hall, Fogler Library, the Cyrus Pavilion Theater, Hauck Auditorium and now, Lord Hall.

As you know, we hope to eventually renovate Alumni Hall for art studio space, really bringing the cultural and performing arts together in this vibrant part of our campus.

Of all the lovely features in the new Lord Hall, my favorite is the large window that overlooks the Mall.

I like the idea that the artists inside can look out on the world, to draw inspiration to fuel their creativity.

At the same time, the window provides the opportunity for the rest of us to look in, literally and symbolically, to observe the process and – most of all – to enjoy the beauty that is created within.

Beginning with Vincent Hartgen and continuing until today, the Art Department has been a real source of pride for the University of Maine. Whether working in the areas of art education, studio art, or art history, our faculty and alumni in the visual arts lend tremendous meaning and inspiration to all of our lives.

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