



Office of the President

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President's Message to the Community: Aug. 17

August 17, 2016 [President's Messages](#)

The start of a new academic year is less than two weeks away — the beginning of the college careers for our record number of incoming students and the final months for those receiving undergraduate degrees this year. And for all — incoming, transfer and current students — new classes and opportunities.

The first day of classes Aug. 29 also will be the start and continuation of graduate school for some, and for others, the push to wrap-up of research, scholarship and creative achievement to earn their degrees.

New faculty and staff will join a community deeply dedicated to providing a quality experience for all UMaine students, and to serving the state.

This is the month we gear up as a university community to do what we do so well.

One of the best examples of that is Fall Welcome Weekend at the end of the month, when we'll be joined by our largest incoming fall class — an estimated 2,300 new students and 450 transfer students. This year, about 45 percent of our new undergraduate students are from out of state.

That brings our overall enrollment of undergraduate and graduate students to more than 11,000, with more out-of-state students than ever before — 30 percent.

For all our new and transfer students, untold numbers of UMaine students, faculty, staff and volunteers campuswide pull out all the stops to make Fall Welcome Weekend a smashing success. From move-in with Maine Hello and the President's Dinner on the Mall to the Welcome Weekend Day of Service that Saturday, and the diligent work in academic offices campuswide, we get great feedback from parents and students. Credit for that goes to all the members of the UMaine community who are so committed to helping provide a quality student experience — in and out of the classroom.

Also contributing to the buzz on campus this month is Athletics — from the first season for our new head football coach to the start of the season for women's soccer, ranked third in an America East preseason poll. I encourage you to take to the sidelines and the stands this fall in support of our amazing student-athletes and coaches whose talents in our Division I programs also are an important component of the UMaine student experience.

This summer had some great highlights, including an announcement at the end of last month by the Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration of more than \$7 million in investments in Maine to address the state's forest-based economic challenges, including several million dollars for UMaine R&D. We look forward to the potential and the promise of these partnerships and others hold for Maine.

The administrative planning team for the primary partnership between UMaine and the University of Maine at Machias submitted its report at the end of July, and work on academic collaboration and on institutional organization continues. All this is happening in a short amount of time — and over the summer months — and our thanks goes out to many, especially Provost Jeff Hecker, Vice Presidents Carol Kim and Robert Dana, and Senior Associate Provost Jeff St. John for their leadership in this initiative. A presentation on the primary partnership for the University of Maine System Board of Trustees will be in November.

Also in keeping with the vision of One University for all of Maine, and with the closing of the Bangor offices of the University of Maine System, we welcome to campus this month more UMS members. They include Chancellor James Page and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Robert Neely, whose offices will be in Estabrooke Hall. Among the UMS community members now at UMaine are those in information technologies, finance, procurement, organizational effectiveness and human resources.

On all fronts, Maine's flagship university looks forward to the fall semester, starting this month.

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