



Remarks of Gregory W. Powell

**Family Wellness Center Announcement
Alfond Youth Center**

Waterville, Maine

January 25, 2018

Thank you, Ken, for that kind introduction, and thank you, Brent and Sue for your comments today.

Over 20 years ago, community leaders—including many of you in this room—gathered at Good Will-Hinckley school to decide how Waterville would come together to do something never done before. Present at the meeting was our rock star CEO Ken Walsh; the CEO of the Waterville YMCA, Phil Crummell; the Mayor; the Parks and Rec Director; Bill Mitchell; George Jabar; and others, including Harold Alfond and me.

At that meeting, it was decided that the Waterville YMCA, Boys' and Girls' Club, and City would come together as a team to build the beautiful facility we are in today and to rebuild the municipal pool next door.

At that meeting and in the two decades that followed, you launched not only the best Youth Center in America but *the only* combined YMCA and Boys' and Girls' Club in America, all to care for our kids. All this here in Waterville, Maine.

At that meeting and in the two decades that followed, you did something else. You sparked the revitalization of this City and then helped lead that revitalization. And today, from the Kennebec River front to Mayflower Hill, Waterville is brimming with progress.

As you have heard, community wellness and building that wellness through family is the wave of the future. And just as this organization has led with innovation and community

teamwork in the past—each year building on its vital mission—it continues to do so today right here.

In the spring of 2006, Mr. Alfond and I stopped in here at the Youth Center in the late afternoon. As we peered into the kitchen, we could see through to a table where a little boy sat alone eating, shoelaces dangling to the floor, a look of contentment on his face. We didn't know this little boy. We didn't know what kind of home he had, whether he had a loving mom and dad to look after him, or enough to eat.

But at that moment, we knew he was in a safe place—a good and healthy place where he was surrounded by caring people and would not be hungry for long.

And we knew that because of this place, he would have an opportunity to succeed in life.

That little boy and all children of our community like him are our mission.

And today, as this organization turns to a new chapter in its history, we still see that little boy sitting at a table, shoe laces dangling...but the picture has gotten a little bigger, and we can now see he is surrounded by a new teaching kitchen, and his mom is there with him learning a better and more healthy way to eat.

That vision and all of what Sue, Ken, and Brent are describing today underscores the great leadership of this organization and its keen sense of knowing the right thing to do and when to do it. And then to lead it.

So on behalf of the Harold Alfond Foundation, I want to congratulate the Youth Center Board, its leadership, staff, and all supporters for the vision, hard work, and careful planning that has gone into the Wellness Center project.

As Harold and Bibby Alfond were 20 years ago, the Alfond Foundation is today honored and privileged to support this new chapter in your history. And we do so for many, many reasons, just two of which I'd like to share with you now in closing.

First, Peter Alfond was a valued member of the Board of Trustees of the Harold Alfond Foundation and a philanthropist in his own right. Peter believed deeply in community wellness and promoted it both through personal funding and vigorous advocacy. If you wanted to know about the road to healthy living, Peter could always be counted on to say a word or two.

So we are especially pleased to support the Wellness Center project in tribute to Peter. Even as we miss him, we see his passion and work carried forward in this effort.

Secondly, Harold and Bibby Alfond loved Waterville. And Harold, sports enthusiast that he was, loved to support winners. This organization and the people in this room are winners in every sense of the word.

So Travis Cummings and I are here today on behalf of the Harold Alfond Foundation and it is our pleasure to announce the Foundation's grant commitment to the Wellness Center project in the amount of \$6.12 million dollars.

Congratulations!