



**Remarks by Gregory W. Powell, Chairman
Harold Alfond Foundation**

**Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens
Bibby and Harold Alfond Children's Garden**

Grand Opening – July 8, 2010

Thank you Maureen for that kind introduction. And good morning to Senator Collins, First Lady Karen Baldacci, President John Giles, special guests and all of you who have joined Miss Rumphius in sowing seeds of lupine and contributing so much to make this special place more beautiful than we could have imagined.

On behalf of the Harold Alfond Foundation, I am delighted to be with you on this lovely summer morning with fellow trustees Ted and Bill Alfond, Bob Marden, Larry Pugh and 3 generations of the Alfond family.

Our family group includes great grandchildren of Bibby and Harold ---children who, as you can tell from their undivided attention, share their great-grandfather's love for long speeches. Mr. Harold used to say: "Greg, keep those speeches short... 'cause when your mouth is in gear, your brain is in park." So brief I will be.

In the summer of 2007---the last summer of his remarkable life, Harold Alfond visited the original gardens at the suggestion of his good friend Larry Pugh. Harold was 93. Together with son Ted and his wife Barbara, Harold saw the beauty of this place then and imagined what more it could be for the state he loved and its children.

Harold's life passion was athletics and children. Bibby Alfond's passion was children and gardens.

And so at the age of 93, with Bibby no longer at his side, Harold was drawn to the vision of what we see here today as he reflected on how his life had been enriched by Bibby and her gardens ---gardens which had graced their summer home for decades.

Moved by the memory of Bibby and her passion, and with Harold's sentiments in our hearts, we knew the Children's Garden was deserving of foundation support. And we felt pride and perfect balance when it was agreed the garden would be named the Bibby and Harold Alfond Children's Garden. And not vice versa.

There are many other reasons why the Harold Alfond Foundation supported this Children's Garden project, and I want to highlight just a few of them.

First, there were no charitable causes more important to Bibby and Harold Alfond than the education of young people. And today, education of children tops the list of priorities for the Harold Alfond Foundation. In this Garden, every square foot of space will foster curiosity, imagination, and development of children. Quite simply, this garden is a masterful and magnificent educational resource and we are enormously proud to have been your partners in its creation.

Second, we look for excellence in the organizations we fund. We seek excellence to maximize the return on our grants. The Children's Garden is another great notch of excellence for Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens. These gardens represent unique excellence by and for the people of Maine and beyond. And with this distinctive excellence, the Gardens have had and will continue to have a significant positive economic impact on the region. Harold Alfond always looked at charitable grants like an investment. He wanted a great return. And in Philanthropy, returns come in a myriad of ways, but basically are measured by the sum of benefits to the community served. The Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens is a great investment and the return for this region and the state will only get better as attendance increases and national prominence climbs.

Finally, we have supported this project because we like to partner with winners and we define winners as talented people with vision, commitment and passion. Here at the Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens, we see winners everywhere we look: Your president, your executive director, your board, your donors, your volunteers, your architect, your construction crews, artists, sculptors.

And to each of you, we say congratulations and thank you for an outstanding effort. As Miss Rumphius' father admonished her to do, **you** have done "something to make the world more beautiful."

Speaking of beauty, we promised a final payment to endow these gardens so their beauty will be preserved for generations to come.

So on behalf of the Harold Alfond Foundation, I am pleased to present our check in the amount of \$500,000.