



News release

Feb. 16, 2015

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Alfond Foundation establishes endowed chaired professorship at the University of Maine in honor of Stephen King

Orono, Maine — An endowed chaired professorship in literature named in honor of best-selling author and University of Maine alumnus Stephen King will be established at his alma mater with the help of a \$1 million award from the Harold Alfond Foundation.

The Stephen E. King Chair in Literature will support a faculty position in the Department of English in honor of King's "substantial body of work and creative impact."

The endowment for the faculty chair position, the first for the English Department, is held at the University of Maine Foundation. A search to fill the position is expected to begin this fall.

An event celebrating the King Chair is being planned for later this year.

"The Harold Alfond Foundation is delighted to make this grant in honor of Stephen King and in support of Maine's flagship university," said Greg Powell, chairman of the Alfond Foundation's Board of Trustees. "This chaired professorship is a tribute to Mr. King's outstanding literary accomplishments and his deep commitment to Maine."

University of Maine President Susan J. Hunter called the endowed chaired professorship "an exceptional gift that honors the tremendous literary legacy of UMaine's most well-known and beloved alumnus."

"Stephen and Tabitha King have been generous supporters of their alma mater for many years," said Hunter. "It is now particularly rewarding to have a prestigious gift such as this that will inspire and influence current and future generations of readers and writers."

The endowed chaired professor will help UMaine recruit and retain a faculty member who is an accomplished teacher and a scholar of literature, according to UMaine College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Dean Emily Haddad.

"This gift from the Harold Alfond Foundation recognizes both Stephen King's extraordinary career and the importance of literature in the public sphere. The King Chair will expand the UMaine English Department's leading role in literature, creative writing and the humanities. Building on the recent successes of the University of Maine Humanities Center, the King Chair will continue to engage students, fellow scholars and

the public in the study and appreciation of literature,” Haddad said. “King is an inspiration for students who are fascinated by literature and its contributions to human culture. The opportunity to study with the King Chair gives them one more reason to choose UMaine.”

Through the years, Harold Alfond and the Harold Alfond Foundation have made more than \$19 million in gifts and pledges to the University of Maine, including naming gifts for Alfond Sports Arena and Alfond Stadium, and the creation of the annual Alfond Challenge to benefit UMaine football. Thousands of students, fans and other members of the UMaine community have benefited from the philanthropy of the Alfond Foundation and Harold Alfond, according to University of Maine Foundation President Jeffery Mills.

Last fall, the Alfond Foundation also awarded a \$3.9 million gift to complete the W² Ocean Engineering Laboratory and Advanced Manufacturing Laboratory at the Advanced Structures and Composites Center on campus. The \$13.8 million facility is named in honor of the philanthropist.

Similarly, generous support for UMaine has come from the Kings and the Stephen & Tabitha King Foundation, which is devoted to promoting, strengthening and supporting Maine communities.

King is a 1970 UMaine graduate who was awarded a National Medal of Arts last September as one of the world’s best-known authors. He and his wife, author Tabitha King, also a UMaine graduate, both received honorary degrees from their alma mater in 1987. As a UMaine English major, King’s mentors included professors Burton Hatlen, Edward Holmes and Jim Bishop. Stephen King’s most recent book is the story collection “The Bazaar of Bad Dreams.”

Special Collections in UMaine’s Fogler Library holds the Stephen Edwin King Literary Papers, available by request with certain access restrictions.

About UMaine:

The University of Maine, founded in Orono in 1865, is the state's only public research university. It celebrated its 150th anniversary in 2015. UMaine is among the most comprehensive higher education institutions in the Northeast and attracts students from Maine and 45 other states, and 65 countries. It currently enrolls 10,922 total undergraduate and graduate students who can directly participate in groundbreaking research working with world-class scholars. The University of Maine offers doctoral degrees in 35 fields, representing the humanities, sciences, engineering and education; master's degrees in nearly 70 disciplines; 90 undergraduate majors and academic programs; and one of the oldest and most prestigious honors programs in the U.S. The university promotes environmental stewardship, with substantial efforts campuswide aimed at conserving energy, recycling and adhering to green building standards in new construction. For more information about UMaine, visit umaine.edu.