



## Media Release

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For immediate release

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### **Harold Alfond® Foundation and Bill & Joan Alfond Foundation Honor Health Care Workforce**

**Augusta, Maine –** Two of the leading philanthropic foundations in Maine have gifted funds to support MaineGeneral Health and its employees who are on the frontlines of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Harold Alfond® Foundation and the Bill & Joan Alfond Foundation have generously teamed up to cover all MaineGeneral costs of providing child care for its employees during the pandemic, in the amount of \$350,000.

Early in the COVID-19 crisis in Maine, leaders of both the Harold Alfond® Foundation and the Bill & Joan Alfond Foundation contacted MaineGeneral Health President & CEO Chuck Hays. “They reached out to us to see how they could help,” Hays said. “They especially wanted to know what our staff needed to be safe, healthy and supported through this crisis.”

In late March, schools and some day cares closed, leaving some MaineGeneral employees without child care options. MaineGeneral quickly partnered with licensed day care centers and assumed the costs of care for MaineGeneral employees who applied for the help. Since March 23, care for children of MaineGeneral employees has been provided at the Alfond Youth & Community Center in Waterville; The Children’s Center in Augusta, Kennebec Valley YMCA in Augusta and MaineGeneral’s own Early Learning Center in Augusta.

“We worked with local child care providers to find slots to meet staff need, finding a geographic balance between Augusta and Waterville,” Hays said. “More than 150 children of our staff have safe and reliable care with these new partnerships. This is just one of the many ways we are supporting our staff at this critical time. We know our community relies on us – now more than ever – and our staff are facing the same hardships as many others. Helping to care for children of our staff is very important to us.”

Bill Alfond said of the Bill & Joan Alfond Foundation’s gift, “We want to honor the courageous staff of MaineGeneral as they protect and serve the community on the

frontlines of this crisis, and the child care providers, like the Alford Youth & Community Center and others, who are essential and valued partners in this pandemic. We wish all of these critical professionals health and safety.”

Greg Powell, chairman of the Harold Alford® Foundation, said, “We recognize that the health care workforce is taking care of us all. They need to have the confidence that their family needs are met so they can continue to provide the very best care during this difficult time. We’re pleased to be able to support our health care workers and their children.”

The foundations have committed to reimbursing MaineGeneral Health’s costs of child care for employees from March 23 through the end of May.

MaineGeneral employee Audra Turner said she is thankful for the child care program. “Due to COVID-19, my day care closed two weeks ago and I wasn’t sure what I was going to do,” said Turner. “I was very fortunate they had an opening for both of our children. This has been an exceptional service to MaineGeneral employees. My kids have been smiling every day that I drop them off and pick them up. From swimming to rock climbing and their exciting stories, words can’t express how happy they are. The staff there, from check-in to pick-up, have been exceptional. I am proud to say I have worked for MaineGeneral for almost 20 years. Thank you for creating this opportunity for our children. Thank you for going above and beyond.”

“During times like this, we feel very fortunate to be working alongside those whose dedication and selflessness inspire us to perform at our very best,” Hays said. “We feel lucky to have the MaineGeneral family and we would never want to address a challenge like this with any other group of people. The continued outpouring of support from the Harold Alford® Foundation and the Bill & Joan Alford Foundation help us do this important work. Over the years, their generosity has enabled us to bring the best care and service to our community. We are grateful for their support daily and now in these extraordinary times.”