



Harold Alfond Foundation awards \$5 million to University of Maine System to establish Maine leadership endowment fund

April 9, 2018

The Harold Alfond Foundation announced April 9 an award of \$5 million to the University of Maine System to establish a Maine leadership endowment fund to support the System's efforts to recruit and retain top executive leadership for the University of Maine.

Distributions from the endowment will help the System fund a nationally competitive compensation package for the next University of Maine president and align performance with critical state research, economic and workforce development needs.

"Given the challenges facing higher education and our state's economy, high-quality executive leadership at Maine's flagship university is critical," said Gregory W. Powell, chairman of the Harold Alfond Foundation.

"The Foundation's grant will enable the University of Maine to compete nationally for a top-tier president and to help incentivize a long-term commitment to our state."

The award establishing a Maine leadership endowment from the Harold Alfond Foundation was preceded by [a gift of \\$1.8 million](#) in support of expanding applied marine research at the Downeast Institute, a signature initiative of the University of Maine and University of Maine at Machias Primary Partnership, and a [\\$3.9 million gift](#) to formally establish the Harold Alfond W² Ocean Engineering Laboratory and Advanced Manufacturing Laboratory at the Advanced Structures and Composites Center on the UMaine campus.

The Foundation has [also awarded a total of \\$9.25 million](#), including a \$7.5 million challenge grant, to help bring transformational change to professional graduate education in support of the University of Maine System's Maine Center for Graduate and Professional Studies.

The University of Maine is the state's premier research university with total research expenditures averaging more than \$86 million a year for the last five years. That accounts for more than three-quarters of the state's total university-related research and development.

The University of Maine graduates more students than any other institution in the state, with most of its graduates beginning their careers with a Maine employer. The institution also is leading a public university strategic effort to attract more young people to Maine, which has the oldest median age in the country.

In fall 2017, UMaine had 3,820 students hailing from outside Maine enrolled in a total student population of 11,240, and achieved a 54.2 percent increase in out-of-state enrollment over a five-year period.

"Maine's universities have eliminated \$82 million in annual spending, frozen tuition six of the last seven years, and make more than \$80 million in financial aid and degree completion assistance available to our students annually," said James H. Page, chancellor of the University of Maine System.

"As careful stewards of tuition and tax dollars, we are especially grateful for the award of endowed resources to help bring a leader to the University of Maine with the talent and national experience we need to continue our work of addressing the state's demographic and workforce challenges.

"We thank the Harold Alfond Foundation for its continued support of our work to reform public higher education in Maine. The Foundation's investment in leadership will help build on UMaine's 150-year legacy of service and its new partnership with the University of Maine at Machias, while preserving crucial public resources for academics and essential programming."

Chancellor Page will introduce the new president of the University of Maine at 10 a.m. Tuesday, April 10, at the Buchanan Alumni House in Orono, and host the new leader at a welcome event at 3:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 11, in the Reynolds Gymnasium conference room on the Machias campus.

The introduction event at UMaine can be viewed live at umaine.edu/president-announcement.

Founded in 1950, the Harold Alfond Foundation furthers the philanthropic legacy of Harold Alfond, the founder of Dexter Shoe Company and a longtime supporter of Maine communities in which he and his family worked and resided. He ensured that his philanthropy would live on by committing nearly all of his wealth to the Foundation, which continues to support charitable causes in the state of Maine. Consistent with Harold Alfond's own giving pattern and philanthropic principles, the Foundation favors education, health care, youth development and other selected charitable causes.

Contact: Dan Demeritt 207.441.6962