

Making a Difference

A monthly sampler of educational, cultural, and economic contributions of Maine's public universities

UMFK Offers Three-year Bachelor's Degree

FORT KENT – UMFK will offer a three-year bachelor's degree in education beginning in the fall of 2010, campus officials announced last month.

The Student Teachers Aspiring to meet the Real challenges of Schools, or STARS program, is the first three-year bachelor's degree program at the University of Maine System.

The STARS Education Program was created for students who wish to complete their bachelor's degree studies in less than four years. Under its accelerated schedule, students would take five classes each semester, carrying approximately 16-18 credit hours. Ideally, a student would enter the STARS program having already completed Early College or advanced placement credit.

The selective, three-year program creates an environment for optimal learning, emphasizing knowledge, values and experiences by integrating teaching, service, and experiential learning.

Renowned Innovator to Present Innovation Workshops

ORONO – Doug Hall, a UMaine alum whose business Eureka! Ranch provides research-based innovation training and tools for some of the world's largest corporations, will teach three-day Innovation Engineering Leadership Programs in three Maine locations.

Based on the Innovation Engineering curriculum Hall is developing at UMaine, the workshop will teach business leaders a systematic approach to profitable growth through innovation. Workshops will be held at Sugarloaf, Sunday River, and in Portland. Registration may be accomplished at the Foster Center's web site or by telephone at 207-581-1454.



Doug Hall

Downtown Augusta Building Donated to UMA

AUGUSTA – At the January meeting of the UMS board, trustees accepted the donation of a downtown Augusta building to UMA.

The six-story structure, known as the Gannett Building, is located at 331 Water Street in the heart of downtown Augusta. UMA officials plan to use it as studio and classrooms for UMA's Art and Architecture programs.

UMF Touts Energy Savings and Roadmap to Carbon Neutrality

FARMINGTON – UMF President Theodora J. Kalikow recently announced the university's finalization of an ambitious roadmap to achieve carbon neutrality by 2035. Developed in accordance with the American College and University President's Climate Commitment, the UMF Climate Action Plan is a detailed proposal to drastically reduce greenhouse gas emissions, decrease energy usage and minimize energy costs for the university. Based on an inventory of UMF's energy use and greenhouse gas emissions, the plan identifies a number of strategies the university will implement to achieve its carbon emissions goals. Included among these actions are: adopting energy efficient behavior and policies; building future campus structures according to U.S. Green Building Council LEED standards or their equivalent and upgrading current facilities to be more energy efficient; pursuing the use of renewable energy sources and, as a last resort, purchasing carbon offsets.

UMF's Climate Action Plan was developed at little to no cost to the university through the work of the Sustainable Campus Coalition, a collaboration of students, faculty, staff, and community members that promote environmental sustainability on campus and in the area community.



UMF's Education Center boasts a geothermal heating and cooling system that will save \$60,000 and 325 metric tons of carbon emissions per year.

UMM Hosts Service Fair

MACHIAS – UMM and UMaine's Cooperative Extension hosted and sponsored a service fair on the UMM campus in honor of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service.

The public was invited to visit the fair and find out about the great work that local agencies, groups, and businesses are doing and investigate possible service opportunities with them. There was a donation box to collect items to help restock the shelves of local food pantries, which are often quite bare after the holiday rush.

The service fair was one of many activities across Maine that were organized to honor the legacy of Dr. King.

UMFK Forest Technology Program Receives Accreditation

FORT KENT – UMFK's Forest Technology Program has been professionally accredited by the Society of American Foresters (SAF).

UMFK is the only SAF-accredited college or university forest technology program within the state of Maine. It is one of only two such programs in all of New England.

The Forest Technology program at UMFK is a conservation-oriented program that focuses on the wise use of forests as a renewable resource. With recognition from SAF, the program ensures that students receive the best education possible. Graduates of UMFK's Forest Technology program receive an Associate of Science degree in Forest Technology.

USM Students Explore MLK, Jr. Legacy with Elementary School

PORTLAND – Some of USM's student resident hall assistants returned to campus before the start of the spring semester to facilitate Martin Luther King Jr. Memoir Writing Workshops which took place in third- through fifth-grade classrooms in Portland's East End and Reiche Elementary Schools.

This project was funded by a Maine Commission of Community Service grant and was facilitated through USM's Office of Community Service, and Learning Works, a community-based organization serving young children, at-risk youth, and low-income families.

Each elementary school student was photographed with a six-word memoir they wrote reflecting the discussion. The photographs will be published in a commemorative book.

USM's volunteers talked about their own personal academic experiences with the students, encouraging them to remain in school and work toward earning a college degree.

UMaine Art Museum Opens Winter Exhibitions

BANGOR – UMaine's Museum of Art opened four new winter exhibits in January, a collection that includes an installation, watercolors, sculpture and expressionistic oil paintings by four artists.

The exhibitions, available at no charge to the public through a grant from Machias Savings Bank, will be on display at the museum's galleries at 40 Harlow St., Bangor through April 3.

Exhibits include: Resonant Places: Paintings by Megan Chase; Simple Complexity: Installation and Works by Gerry Stecca; Burnt Cove: Watercolors of the Maine Landscape by Gerald Matthew Immonen; and Bio-Permutation: Sculptures by David Isenhour.

More information is available on the museum web site: www.umma.umaine.edu.



Students discussing a project at USM's Civic Matters.

Civic Matters at USM

PORTLAND – USM held "Civic Matters," a showcase of how students and their professors apply what they are learning in the classroom to community projects.

Projects that were highlighted include: development of natural playgrounds, supporting youth in foster care, the effects of milfoil on Sebago Lake's water quality, educating people about alternatives to commonly used soaps with chemicals that affect the environment, and identifying potential sites for public art installations.

Last year, 2,349 USM students reported 45,134 hours of service in the community. These students, often led by their professors who design classroom projects around community action, fulfill USM's promise of engaged learning that transforms lives and communities.

Many of the students involved worked with local youth groups, elderly individuals, and the general public. They each wrote a research paper on a specific suggestion of service, giving cost analyses and providing details about how to implement them. These class papers were compiled into a report submitted to the city that will guide the task force on which recommendations are reasonable to pursue.



UMM's Islands of Maine sculpture

UMM Campus Welcomes New Sculpture

MACHIAS – UMM is the new home of an impressive piece of public art. “The Islands of Maine,” a large-scale granite sculpture, was recently installed on the campus.

Created by a sculptor from the Republic of Georgia, the sculpture is part of the Schoodic International Sculpture Symposium, held this past summer on Schoodic Point in Acadia National Park. The sculpture was crafted primarily from nearby Jonesboro granite.

The Schoodic International Sculpture Symposium is a biennial event that brings together artists, visitors, and communities to create a Public Sculpture Community in eastern Maine. Machias is one of only six Maine communities, and the only Washington County site, receiving a sculpture from this year's Symposium.

UMF Launches Four-Year Graduation Guarantee

FARMINGTON – UMF President Theodora J. Kalikow recently announced the launch of "Farmington in Four"—UMF's innovative, new four-year graduation guarantee. Developed for students for whom graduation in four years is a priority, this initiative is being offered to all incoming first-year students and is in keeping with Farmington's long-standing commitment to student success. Farmington in Four will be offered to any full-time, first-year student who begins his or her studies in the 2010 fall semester.

The guarantee applies to all academic majors and pledges the completion of a Farmington degree in four years, or the remaining required coursework will be provided at no additional cost.

Participants will follow a list of practical guidelines while completing 32 credit hours per year, which can also include coursework during winter, May and summer terms.

For additional information on Farmington in visit: www.farmington.edu/farmin4-pledge.php.

Taking Household Finance to the Schools

ORONO – UMaine's School of Economics has revised its Financial Literacy outreach program, and is now taking it into Maine's middle and high schools to reach younger audiences.

Graduate student Sarah Morehead, a research assistant in the School of Economics, spent the past semester teaching and counseling as many as 200 UMaine undergraduates about the psychology of economics and basic budgeting. The revised program is called Household Financial Education and is designed for students from middle school to college.

The program helps students understand their “financial personality” and leads to a more successful structure for managing household finances.

Experts say traditional community finance classes tend to be too complex. Helping people understand how they are affected by money helps them better understand finances.

UCB Unveils New Veterans Lounge

BANGOR – In early December, Major General John Libby joined UMA President Allyson Handley, student veterans, members of Bangor's 101st Air Refueling Wing, and other guests to formally open the University College of Bangor's new Veteran's Lounge.

The Veterans' Lounge, located in UCB's Eastport Hall, is one of the special student-veteran related projects funded through a \$100,000 grant the UMA received last June from the American Council on Education (ACE) and Wal-Mart Foundation. UMA was the only institution in all of New England to receive an ACE/Wal-Mart grant and one of only 20 institutions nationwide to receive the highly competitive grants. Speaking at the ribbon-cutting ceremony were President Handley, Major General Libby, student-veteran Patty Violette, and representatives from Senators Snowe and Collins offices.

UMPI Offers Energy Courses

PRESQUE ISLE – With its wind turbine spinning and lots of questions about renewable energy, the environment, climate change, and sustainability in the air, UMPI is offering energy courses designed especially for those who want to understand these key topics and the issues surrounding them.

Energy Law and Public Policy will help students learn about the law and public policy surrounding energy issues by using a case study based on UMPI's own wind turbine project.

A special learning community has formed that allows participants to explore environmental issues while completing general education requirements in English Literature and World Civilization.

UMaine Receives \$12.4 Million for Wind Energy Facility

ORONO – UMaine has received a \$12.4 million grant from the U.S. Commerce Department's National Institute of Standards and Technology for construction of its new deepwater offshore wind energy research and testing facility.

The 30,000 square foot addition to UMaine's Advanced Structures and Composites Center will be the only facility of its kind in the United States to include complete development capabilities for designing, prototyping, and testing large structural hybrid composite and nanocomposite components for the deep water offshore wind energy industry.

The new Advanced Nanocomposites in Renewable Energy Laboratory will support a materials and engineering research program designed to capitalize on two of the state's key resources, wind energy and wood. Funding for UMaine's new facility is being distributed to Maine through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA).



Stephen Walsh, "Scape," oil on canvas, 2008 Jurors Award Winner

USM's Juried Student Exhibition on Display in Portland

PORTLAND – USM's Woodbury Campus' Area Gallery will display the work of art students in a free exhibit running through March 5. The exhibit will be open 7 a.m. – 10 p.m.; Monday through Friday.

All works in this exhibit debuted in USM's Gorham Art Gallery last fall as part of the larger annual Juried Student Exhibition. Among selected works on exhibit will be an oil panel by John Puiia of Scarborough, winner of the President's Purchase Award, and an oil painting by Stephen Walsh of Windham, which won the Jurors' Award.

This exhibit offers the public the opportunity to enjoy the work of these emerging artists while presenting the student artists with a chance to see their work presented in a gallery setting.

For more information, visit www.usm.maine.edu/gallery.

UMPI Dedicates GIS Laboratory

PRESQUE ISLE – UMPI recently hosted a dedication ceremony for its new Geospatial Information Technology Center. The GITeC lab, a GIS (Geographic Information System) and GPS (Global Positioning System) laboratory, will be used for classroom instruction and community training and services.

Earlier this summer, the university received a \$96,800 Maine Technology Asset Fund grant from the Maine Technology Institute to fund the purchase of cutting edge equipment to establish a state-of-the-art lab facility on campus. The grant was one of only 16 awarded on a competitive basis from 49 applications from companies, universities and nonprofit research institutions across Maine.

The new GITeC lab will collaborate with community partners consisting of municipalities, native tribes, and non-profit organizations to develop GIS databases that allow communities to do a wide range of activities, including inventorying and marketing their assets, maximizing planning and development of natural resources, attracting and retaining businesses, and managing infrastructure for municipal growth. The center will also provide training and technical service to its community partners.

Chancellor Updates Trustees on System-wide Initiative

BANGOR – Chancellor Richard L. Pattenau updated UMS Trustees in early January on the progress and next steps of the "New Challenges, New Directions" initiative which was approved by Trustees in November.

He noted that with the System is seeing progress on all fronts—from shutting down a mainframe in a move to Internet-based computing, to sketching out the first concepts for a common calendar for all seven universities. He also highlighted nursing program leadership's efforts to expand capacity and draft a plan to help the System meet the state's need for additional nurses.

To learn more, visit: www.maine.edu/UMSNCOND.

UMS Distance Ed Credit Hours Up 18%

BANGOR – At the January meeting of UMS Trustees, vice chancellor James Breece presented several reports related to academic and student affairs, including a report on distance education—which has seen a 14% increase in students and more than 18% increase in credit hours over the previous year.

Breece noted that distance education meets the needs of students who are bound by time or geographic location—particularly the adult students—giving them flexibility and allows them to more easily balance work, child care, and other priorities.