As we celebrate the 80th year of the University of Maine Foundation, it is a good time to reflect on the impact made by the most significant gift ever received by the Foundation. That first gift of $1,000 from the UMaine Class of 1909 was “the gift” which initiated all that has happened through the work of the Foundation for the last eighty years. The foresight of those individuals who wanted to ensure the future of UMaine cannot be overstated. That $1,000 which is now almost $220 million in assets—not including the millions of dollars in investment proceeds paid out in scholarships and other support—has made a significant difference for the students, faculty and staff at UMaine.

In FY14, the Foundation recorded new outright and planned gifts totaling $13,636,514. There were 2,616 gifts and 62 new endowment funds established. The Foundation now holds 1,466 endowment funds.

Former Professor and Alumnus Gifts Over $2M for Scholarships, Professorship

An endowed scholarship fund and political science professorship have been established in the University of Maine Foundation with over $2 million in gifts from John Nickerson, a University of Maine alumnus and professor emeritus at the University of Maine at Augusta who passed away in May 2013.

The Sept. 23 announcement of the scholarship fund and professorship by University of Maine Foundation President/CEO Jeffery Mills was made in UMaine’s North Stevens Hall, where the John Mitchell Nickerson Room was dedicated in honor of the member of the UMaine class of 1959. The professorship will be known as the John Mitchell Nickerson Professorship of Political Science and will provide support for an accomplished UMaine political science professor. The endowed John M. Nickerson Scholarship Fund will make merit awards to UMaine juniors and seniors majoring in political science or participating in the prelaw program who are residents of Maine. If the market cooperates, the fund will generate approximately $100,000 per year for scholarships starting in 2016.

“This substantial gift will result in one of the largest scholarship funds managed by the University of Maine Foundation,” said Mills. “Dr. Nickerson was a dedicated political science professional and scholar. With this significant and ongoing support for UMaine students and faculty, his work will continue to advance in Maine and beyond.”

— Jeffery N. Mills, Ph.D.

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Debra A. Gervais, who graduated in 1986 with a bachelor’s degree in Honors and chemistry, is Division Chief of Abdominal Imaging at Massachusetts General Hospital and Associate Professor of Radiology, Harvard Medical School. Originally from Madawaska, Gervais attended Tufts Medical School, where she was named to the Alpha Omega Alpha honor society. She completed an internship year in internal medicine at Maine Medical Center in Portland. Gervais did her residency training in diagnostic radiology at Massachusetts General Hospital, where she served one year as Chief Resident in Radiology and pursued sub-specialty fellowship training in abdominal imaging and intervention. Prior to her return to Massachusetts General Hospital, Gervais was a private practice radiologist and an attending radiologist at Boston Children’s Hospital.

Christopher P. Keating, an Investment Management Executive in the Boston area, received a bachelor’s degree in business administration in 1979.

After graduating from the University of Maine, Keating played for seven years in the National Football League, spending six years in Buffalo and one in Washington. He became registered as a stockbroker and worked during his last three off-seasons from football. Upon retirement, Keating earned his law degree from Suffolk University Law School in 1991.

John K. Veroneau graduated in 1983 with a bachelor’s degree in English. He practices international trade law at Covington & Burling LLP, a Washington, D.C.-based global law firm, where he co-chairs the International Trade and Investment practice group. He has served as capital markets head of the International T rade and Investment practice group. He has served as a fellow at the Atlantic Council and as a legislative assistant to former Representative Nan Hayworth. He received his law degree from Suffolk University Law School in 1991.
New Ways to Connect with the Foundation

Recently, the Foundation launched a new website with updated navigation and optimization for phones and tablets. The process is ongoing and there are additional changes ahead. The address remains the same, umainefoundation.org. Along with the website, Facebook (facebook.com/umainefoundation) and Twitter (@umainef) are active. Watch for LinkedIn and YouTube to be active soon.

From UMaine to Tufts Medical School

University of Maine alumna Kimberly Dao ’14 delivered a heartfelt message at the University of Maine Foundation Scholarship Recognition Reception in Southern Maine recently. This is an excerpt from her remarks.

“What I can tell you today is that the education I received at UMaine surpassed what my parents, friends, and I could have ever imagined. My parents taught me that anything is possible if we worked for it. So despite the financial struggle to afford a secondary education, the Top Scholar Award helped me become part of the first generation of college graduates in my family. In addition, I graduated without debt and the Foundation is continuing to help me in medical school through the Gilbert Loan Program, which is like the jackpot of all loans.

The Tufts program is an incredible opportunity and it wouldn't have been possible without the connections I made through UMaine. A college education really consists of more than what a student learns in a classroom; it encompasses life experiences. I have acquired some of these through my UMaine involvement. Knowing I have the support of the UMaine Foundation behind me, I am driven to be the best that I can be. It is part of being a recipient of these amazing scholarships that I feel an obligation to seize all the opportunities presented to me. I hold myself to high academic, social, and communal standards. And you will notice this universal theme with many other UMaine Foundation recipients. It means a lot to have our hard work be recognized but, more than anything, being a scholar also serves as an inspiration to always do your best, to strive for excellence, and to give back to the community.

The unmatched UMaine community has fostered an unyielding desire to further my education that has truly enriched my life. I cannot thank the Foundation and donors enough. With the help of the scholarships I have received, I will not have to worry as much about finances; it will enable me to focus on what I value, which is learning and being able to give back to the community. I want to reiterate once again how much I appreciate everything the Foundation has done for me, the University, and countless others.

Thank you and GO BLUE!”

Dao’s complete remarks are available on the Foundation website: umainefoundation.org

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