

Legacies

UNIVERSITY of MAINE
FOUNDATION

University of Maine Foundation
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Volume 35 No. 2 Fall 2025

MESSAGE FROM FOUNDATION PRESIDENT/CEO JEFFERY N. MILLS '82, PH.D.



This fall has been filled with celebrations and record-breaking event attendance. During Family and Friends Weekend, we hosted ribbon cuttings for the renovated Alford Arena and the New Balance Track & Field and Soccer Complex. Funding for these two projects was secured through the Harold Alford Foundation and many other donors. We are grateful for their investments in UMaine. During the Senior Alumni Reunion, we celebrated 150 years of the University of Maine Alumni Association with a heart-touching program in the Collins Center for the Arts. On Homecoming Weekend, we honored Walt Abbott, a longtime UMaine coach, educator and administrator, by naming a new space in the upcoming Morse Arena (more details can be found on page 2).

Our Board Chair, Dr. Bob Strong has termed out of that position and will continue as Board Treasurer. Looking ahead, we welcome Chris Keating '79 as our new Board Chair.

Plans for our annual Florida Road Trip with the University of Maine Alumni Association are underway. The Red Sox game date announcement will be made as soon as the schedule is released. We look forward to seeing many of you on this trip. On May 15, we will host our biennial Stillwater Society Dinner on campus.

Thank you for your continued support and engagement.

Jeffery N. Mills '82, Ph.D., President/CEO
University of Maine Foundation



Chris Keating '79 (left), Elisabeth Crowley (center) and University of Maine Foundation President/CEO Jeff Mills '82 pose for a photo as Elisabeth accepts her certificate for Honorary Membership at the Foundation.

Celebrating Our Most Successful Year in History

The corporate annual business meeting for the University of Maine Foundation was held over Homecoming Weekend in late October. The event was followed by the annual luncheon where we were joined by many of you who make this organization successful. We thanked our outgoing Board Chair, Dr. Bob Strong, for his service as chair from 2020-2025 and welcomed our new Board Chair, Chris Keating '79.

The Foundation has experienced a year of extraordinary achievements. We are happy to announce that a record-breaking \$97 million was raised this year in support of the University of Maine and its students. This unprecedented total is a resounding testament to the strength and loyalty of the Black Bear Nation.

The 2025 total represents a 410% increase over the \$19 million averaged for University of Maine fundraising prior to the merger of the University of Maine Development Office and the University of Maine Foundation in 2016.

The growth of UMaine's endowment has risen over 135% since 2013.

This moment also comes during the largest generational transfer of wealth in U.S. history. Many in the Baby Boomer generation are choosing to include the University of Maine Foundation in their estate plans, making a lasting impact on future Black Bears and securing the university's strength for years to come.

Investments from donors, along with transformational grants from the Harold Alford Foundation, ensure that UMaine remains competitive, resilient, and positioned as a top-tier flagship university. Change is happening faster than ever, and to keep pace, bold and strategic investments in people, programs, and infrastructure are critical.

The digital version of the annual report is available online: umainefoundation.org/AR25.

Maine Athletics Announce Plans for Walt Abbott '58, '65G Sports Performance Center

The University of Maine will name its new sports performance center for Walt Abbott, a Black Bear Hall of Fame student-athlete, coach and administrator who spent more than five decades helping shape the university's athletic program.

"I am truly grateful for this recognition," Abbott said. "I have had the honor of being a part of the UMaine community since 1954; first as a student athlete, then as a coach, an educator, an administrator, and a fan. Carol and I met here as students, we raised our family here, and we have known thousands of students and coworkers on this campus who have been like family. UMaine has meant the world to me, and I have always been proud to be a Black Bear."

"Walt Abbott's legacy is woven into the fabric of UMaine athletics," UMaine President Joan Ferrini-Mundy said. "This new center will stand as a lasting tribute to his commitment to our student-athletes and to the values of leadership, character and excellence he embodies."

Abbott ('58, '65G), inducted into the

Upcoming Events

Visit our websites to find the most up-to-date information: UMaineFoundation.org
UMaineAlumni.com and UMaine.edu.

Spring 2026

Florida Road Trip and Red Sox game

May 15, 2026 (by invitation)
Stillwater Society Dinner

University of Maine Foundation
Two Alumni Place
Orono, Maine 04469-5792
207.581.5100 or 800.982.8503

300 Fore Street
Portland, Maine 04101
207.245.3656



umainefoundation.org • umainefoundation@maine.edu

Legacies is published twice annually
Jeff Mills, Publisher
Monique Hashey, Editor

UMaine Sports Hall of Fame in 2004, dedicated more than 50 years to the athletic department. He mentored hundreds of student-athletes as an assistant coach, head coach, interim athletic director and faculty member in what is now the College of Education and Human Development.

Several of his former players and colleagues contributed more than \$500,000 in gifts to support the naming opportunity.

"There have been a lot of greats who have been part of Maine Athletics, and Walt Abbott is at the top of this list and is the gold standard," said Director of Athletics Jude Killey. "All that Walt accomplished in his career was remarkable, yet his legacy is well beyond those successes and lies within his character. Walt is the single most revered person and mentor I have encountered in my time at Maine and it is an honor for all of us to recognize him."

"Along with Walt's many accomplishments, Walt and his late wife, Carol '59, have been long-time donors to the University of Maine," said UMaine Foundation President Jeff Mills. "This recognition is well-deserved and we are grateful for their generosity."

Abbott, a three-year letterwinner for the UMaine football team from 1955 through 1957, served as an assistant coach with the



football program before succeeding Harold Westerman as the head coach at UMaine in 1967. Abbott spent nine seasons at the helm of the Black Bears, guiding UMaine to a Yankee Conference Championship in 1974.

In 1984, the Walt Abbott Outstanding Defensive Player Award was established in the football program in his honor and is presented to Maine's top defensive player each season.

Following his time as head coach, Abbott twice fulfilled the role of director of athletics. He first filled the vacant position from May to December in 1991 before another term from April 1994 to December 1995.

In the classroom, Abbott educated students in the areas of coaching, physical education, outdoor leadership, and safety and rescue.

Abbott, born in Rumford in 1936, graduated from Stephens High School in 1954 before going on to earn degrees from UMaine in 1958 and 1965. Abbott and his late wife, Carol, raised three children, Steven, Scott and Sherry '95.



The Walt Abbott Sports Performance Center will be constructed inside Morse Arena. The 6,000-square-foot facility will feature state-of-the-art equipment for speed, strength and agility training and will serve football, basketball and select other varsity programs.

Financial Support Opens Doors



Receiving the Clarine Coffin Grenfell '32 Poetry Prize and Speaker Fund was especially meaningful for Chantelle Flores. It recognized her creative achievements and passion for poetry. The award provided both encouragement and validation for her work, inspiring her to continue exploring the intersections of art, writing, and health through her research. It also allowed her to share her voice more confidently within the UMaine community and beyond, reinforcing her goal of pursuing a Ph.D. in art history and becoming a professor who empowers future generations of artists and scholars. Flores has found that her time at UMaine has been shaped by opportunities made possible through donor support. "The scholarship has allowed me to focus on the experiences and opportunities most fulfilling to me without constantly stressing over tuition or debt," she explained. This support enabled her to take on roles such as co-editor-in-chief for *Spire: The Maine Journal of Conservation and Sustainability* and editor of *The Open Field*, while also continuing to tutor at UMaine's Writing Center, pursuing the McGillicuddy Humanities Fellowship, and completing her first artist residency with The Monson Seminar at Monson Arts. Grateful for donor generosity, she adds, "The support of donors has allowed me to fully embrace and enjoy my undergraduate experience. I would not be able to conduct my research and creative projects without it. Someday I hope to pass along the support I've received to future students. If you're a donor thinking of creating a scholarship, you'll create an amazingly positive impact for so many students like me. Thank you!"

New Learning Center Opens



Recently, the College of Education and Human Development held a dedication ceremony honoring Major General (Retired) Bill Libby '66, '67G and Cindy Fuller Libby '67, '96G for their generous gift to create the Libby and Fuller Family Learning Commons on the first floor of Shibles Hall. Faculty, staff and students were present to applaud the gift and share stories of how they've been able to utilize and enjoy the new space.

The Libbys wanted their gift to transform a space into a "home" for students in the College of Education and Human Development, fostering community and support through a shared space that generations could enjoy.

Major General (Retired) Bill Libby was born and raised in Lewiston, Maine. After spending a year at West Point, he joined UMaine, where he completed his undergraduate and graduate degrees in education. While attending UMaine, he met his bride-to-be, Cindy Fuller, in the dining room of Stewart Commons, where Bill worked as a student.

Cindy was born and raised in Ellsworth and followed her family's legacy of attending UMaine. She studied business administration. After a brief career in bookkeeping, she realized her passion was in counselor education and decided to pursue graduate school, having raised her three sons, Derek, Jeff, and Brad.

Bill would later pursue a military career as an officer and earn his rank as Major General before retiring. Cindy would work as a school counselor until her retirement. While attending UMaine together, they discovered how much it meant to them and how it became a home, which fostered their relationship and contributed to their college success.

INVESTMENT NEWS



The Foundation's investment consulting firm, Prime Buchholz, presented performance results of the General Endowment portfolio for the year ended June 30, 2025, at the annual meeting of the Foundation held on October 24.

Working with the Investment Committee, Prime Buchholz described the construction of the portfolio as a well-diversified, all-weather fund with a tilt toward higher growth. The growth orientation has benefited from double-digit returns across global equity markets reporting a one-year return of 13.5%. This result for the year ended June 30, 2025, placed the Foundation's performance in the top 3% among a peer group of 70 similarly sized endowments and foundation portfolios.

Fueled by outstanding investment performance and strong fundraising, the General Endowment has grown to an all-time high of \$435 million. Thank you to those who have been thoughtful in establishing an endowed fund with the University of Maine Foundation to continue their legacy of giving in support of the University of Maine and our students.

End of Year Tax Planning

Signed into law on July 4, 2025, the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA) alters the federal tax rules related to claiming a tax deduction for charitable donations and for those taking the standard deduction. Some provisions apply to giving for the 2025 tax year and we recommend that you consult your tax advisor now for your year-end giving decisions because it may make sense to front-load future gifts to year-end 2025 to lock in the full 37% deduction value before the new cap and floor take effect. Beginning in 2026, taxpayers who take the standard deduction can also deduct up to \$1,000 (single filers) or \$2,000 (married couples filing jointly) for gifts directly to the University of Maine Foundation.

Scholarship Established with Planned Gift



Donna Gilbert (left), Lisa DeBruyckere '84 and '88G (Center) and James Gilbert (right)

The James R. Gilbert and Donna M. Gilbert Wildlife Legacy Scholarship was established with a planned gift from Lisa DeBruyckere, one of Jim's former students. During her time at UMaine Lisa was a student of James R. Gilbert, Ph.D., Emeritus Professor of Wildlife Ecology in the Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Conservation Biology. Jim provided Lisa with an opportunity to work with a team of individuals to capture, tag, and track the movement of harbor seals along the New England coast, and to attach radio collars to moose using helicopters and boats. It was during those many summer days, over numerous summers, that Jim, and his wife, Donna, became mentors and lifelong friends and colleagues of Lisa and many other students.

Lisa believes that the quality of the education she and other natural resource students received at UMaine is a testament to the commitment and dedication of faculty members like Jim and his wife, Donna, who shared their passion for the outdoors and wildlife conservation and themselves with so many of Jim's students.

Lisa earned three degrees at UMaine, a bachelor's degree in journalism (1984) and bachelor's and master's degrees in wildlife management (1984 and 1988). She went on to work in a variety of natural resource and information and education positions in state government for 21 years in Missouri and Oregon. In 2002, she started her own successful consulting business, Creative Resource Strategies LLC, helping federal, state, and local government, nonprofit, and university natural resource organizations achieve public engagement, biological assessment, and strategic planning goals, and addressing complex natural resource issues with a diversity of stakeholders. Lisa has received multiple awards in recognition of her work.

Now, more than three decades after meeting Jim and Donna, Lisa visits the Gilberts when she is in Maine. Recently, they enjoyed lunch in Rockland.

The scholarship will benefit UMaine students who graduated from high schools outside of Maine (Lisa is from Massachusetts) with financial need who are pursuing a degree in the Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Conservation Biology.



LEGACY SOCIETY

Charles F. Allen

*Here is sample language for making
a bequest to the
University of Maine Foundation:*

"I give and bequeath to the
**UNIVERSITY OF MAINE
FOUNDATION** for the benefit of the
University of Maine:

the sum of \$ _____;
or
_____ percent of my estate;
or
the property described herein

to establish/add to the

Fund.

The principal is to be endowed and
the distributions, as established by
the University of Maine Foundation
Board of Directors, shall be used for
_____."

The Charles F. Allen Legacy Society was established in 1995 to recognize and honor alumni and friends who intend to remember the University of Maine or its affiliated organizations by making a bequest or other form of planned or deferred gift.

Legacy Society members receive a membership certificate recognizing their intentions and a lapel pin. Members also are honored at a special event on campus. For more information about the society, umainefoundation.org/about-the-foundation/charles-f-allen-society/