

Annual State of the University Address
August/September 2011



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President

University of Maine at Augusta
Augusta • Bangor • Online • Statewide

INSPIRATION

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“Those are a success who have lived well, laughed often. And loved much; who have gained the respect of intelligent people and the love of children, who have filled their niche and accomplished their task, who leave the world better than they found it, whether by a perfect poem or a rescued soul; who never lacked appreciation of the earth’s beauty or failed to express it; who looked for the best in others and gave the best they had.”

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Introduction

It is a pleasure to welcome you to the official beginning of the 2011/12 academic year. As your president, this is my fourth “Welcome Back Breakfast” and my fourth “State of the University Address”. Thank you for joining me to celebrate UMA’s successes during the past year and, more importantly, to acknowledge the dedicated service of our colleagues who have orchestrated and enabled our institutional success.

In keeping with our four year old tradition of establishing an organizational “theme” each year, I am pleased to announce that the theme for this year is “inspiration”. The aforementioned Ralph Waldo Emerson quote has been an incredible inspiration to me since I discovered it as a university student. Perhaps you also have a favorite quote, a poem, a work of art or a song that inspires you especially on those inevitable days when you are burdened by crushing deadlines, a difficult work situation or a personal challenge. In my experience, that is when we most need a healthy dose of inspiration to help propel us forward.

Inspiration comes in many forms. At UMA, we are particularly fortunate because so many of our remarkable students and employees provide such inspiring examples of determination and courage. Many of our students and colleagues have overcome formidable personal challenges in their pursuit of higher education. I am inspired by the young mother who, with her small children, leaves an abusive relationship to pursue a nursing degree and provide a better life for her family, or the wounded warrior who returns from Afghanistan and makes the difficult transition to civilian life. Other challenges may be less dramatic but are still inspiring like the middle aged student who demonstrates such personal courage by enrolling at UMA or one of the University College Centers despite having suffered while in high school from an undiagnosed learning disability. Or the UMA student of any age who sadly has grown up in a dysfunctional family plagued by substance abuse, poverty and neglect. Inspiration surrounds us every day at UMA and throughout the academic year we will try to focus on people, opportunities, initiatives and situations that have the capacity to inspire. First, let us reflect together on the past year to provide inspiration for the current academic year.

Looking Back – FY 2010/11

Collaboration

Collaboration was the theme of our last academic year and there are numerous examples of successful internal and external collaborations to celebrate.

- UMA's 2011 – 2016 Strategic Plan "Transforming Lives: Educating Our Students to be Global Citizens" was approved by the Board of Trustees.
- Academic Reorganization into the College of Arts and Sciences and the College of Professional Studies was approved by the Board of Trustees.
- A new name for the Bangor campus (formerly University College Bangor), UMA Bangor, was approved by the Board of Trustees.
- A new UMA logo and brand was introduced that represents our institutional strengths. Thank you to Bob Stein for taking leadership with this initiative.
- The Baldrige Improvement Committee, chaired by Dr. Margaret Patterson, submitted a report to the President with recommendations designed to improve UMA's performance in the area of "Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge Management".
- Online Maine was launched by University College.
- The UMA Enrollment Management Plan was developed under the very capable leadership of Jon Henry and Sheri Fraser.
- YOUMA was launched during the summer of 2010 with support from a Presidential Mini-grant. During summer 2011, the second session of this highly successful program took place. Thank you to the faculty and staff who participated this year.
- The President's Faculty Research Grant program was established.
- UMA was awarded a Strategic Investment Fund (SIF) grant by the Chancellor to enrich our university's emerging baccalaureate mission.
- UMA developed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the University of Southern Maine to collaborate in offering undergraduate and graduate public administration programs.
- Another UMA "cluster course" was offered entitled "Prisms and Culture" through support from a Presidential Enrollment Mini-grant. Faculty members Ellen Taylor, Rob Rainey and Sarah Hentges collaborated to offer this very successful course.
- Dr. Ellen Chaffee from the Association for Governing Boards (AGB) conducted an impressive "Strategic Financing Workshop" at UMA in April to assist in aligning our strategic planning priorities with our fiscal resources.
- UMA's federal Cornerstone grant was renewed. Congratulations to Cornerstone staff and student peer-mentors for providing continued academic and personal support for UMA students.

Additional UMA Successes

- The Gannett Building was renovated and the architecture program relocated to the site. A portion of the art program has also been relocated to the Gannett building.
- In Bangor, a new state-of-the-art Dental Clinic was completed and Augusta Hall was demolished.
- Energy efficiencies were created with the installation of propane gas at the Gannett Building. Work has begun by the city of Bangor to provide natural gas lines to the Bangor campus. Thank you to Sheri Stevens and Peter St. Michel and their colleagues for completing these extensive facilities upgrades during the past year.
- Ellen Schneider was hired as UMA's Vice President for Finance and Administration. Ms. Schneider previously served as Governor Baldacci's Commissioner of Budget and Finance. Thank you to Bob Stein for chairing the search committee and to the other members for completing this search so effectively within a very short timeline.
- UMA's enrollment continues to grow which resulted in a significant fiscal surplus that will be partially directed towards UMA's deferred maintenance and facility needs. Congratulations to Jon Henry, and the advising staff in Augusta and Bangor and all other faculty and staff who are contributing to UMA's improved enrollment and retention performance.
- Thank you to Interim Provost Dr. Joe Szakas, Interim Deans Gillian Jordan, Dr. Brenda McAleer and Rob Roper who are serving UMA so ably during this period of academic transition.
- Twelve full-time faculty searches have been completed. Thank you to faculty and staff who served on these multiple search committees and facilitated all of the accompanying personnel actions and processes.
- Five new staff positions have been funded through the successful UMA SIF grant. These positions include an academic data analyst and an additional instructional technologist as recommended by the Baldrige Improvement Committee chaired by Dr. Margaret Patterson.
- UMA launched our first program specific mini-capital campaign to fund equipment for the new dental clinic. A similar campaign has been developed for the architecture program.
- New and enhanced articulation agreements have been created with community colleges throughout Maine to expand UMA's already strong student transfer program. Josh Nadel was appointed by Chancellor Pattenaude to work closely with the Community College system to operationalize the existing articulation agreements that exist with the UMS.
- Kudos to the UMA faculty and academic program coordinators for your diligent efforts to develop and finalize online academic programs that are featured on the Online Maine website.
- According to our recent results on the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), UMA students continue to rate our university very favorably in providing a "supportive educational environment" equal to or above our peer institutions.

Looking Forward

Despite these and other challenges, UMA continues to be an inspiring institution where students are encouraged to pursue their personal and professional dreams. As we begin the new academic year, UMA is poised to achieve a new level of academic and administrative success. Collectively, we have worked diligently to accomplish a great deal during the past academic year. I am proud of the teamwork and collaboration that we have demonstrated as we seek to serve our students in an exemplary manner.

I am pleased to announce several new and expanded initiatives and developments that hopefully will help inspire us all to continue UMA's pursuit of excellence.

- **New Faculty & Staff** – We welcome twelve new faculty members and five new staff members to the UMA community. We are inspired by the new perspectives, expertise and ideas that you bring to us.
- **New Board of Visitors members** – We welcome four new members to UMA's distinguished Board of Visitors; Dr. Peter Guzzetti, Internist and Dentist with Kennebec Internal Medicine Associates, Chuck Hays, President and CEO of Maine General Medical Center, Dr. Janice Mokros, Executive Director of the Maine Mathematics and Science Alliance (MMSA), and Warren Winslow, legal Partner with Pierce Atwood LLP and former Assistant Attorney General of Maine. We appreciate your willingness to advise and guide UMA on our quest for excellence.
- **Presidential Enrollment Mini-grant Fund** – Our very successful Presidential Enrollment Mini-grant Fund will be increased by \$5,000 to provide a total of \$50,000 to support innovative student recruitment and retention activities. Last year 15 excellent projects/activities were funded ranging from Chelsea Ray's "French Language and Franco-American Cultural Initiative" to Barbara Pincus' Bangor campus project entitled "Writing Center Growth and Development". The theme for the current competitive grants process will be "Inspiring Students into Action – Motivating Minds & Realizing Dreams". The deadline for submission of proposals is Friday, October 7, 2011. Thank you to Jon Henry and his outstanding committee for managing this program and for skillfully completing the very difficult task of selecting the finalists.
- **Presidential Research Grant Fund** – UMA will continue to fund faculty research through a competitive fund of \$50,000 available for the current academic year. In September, the Provost will distribute the guidelines and timelines for the current round of funding.
- **New Presidential Strategic Development Fund** – Created to provide an additional source of professional development funding for faculty, the President's Strategic Development Fund will support professional development and/or research activities that are strongly aligned with UMA's current strategic plan. This fund is in addition to currently existing faculty development funds available within the academic dean's and provost's budgets. In view of our evolving baccalaureate mission, special consideration will be given to support UMA full-time faculty

efforts to complete doctoral degrees. A \$40,000 pool of competitive funding has been set aside for this endeavor. Guidelines will be forthcoming shortly. By the way, congratulations to Dr. Lynne King who recently completed her doctoral degree. Tom Giordano is currently undertaking some interesting research comparing course delivery modes in accounting classes.

- **Presidential Professional Development Fund for Staff** – A new competitive \$25,000 fund has been established to supplement existing professional development support for UMA staff. This fund will be split between PEA and CEA and will be used to defray or cover the cost of individual participation in professional meetings, symposiums, seminars or other experiences relevant to the employee’s University responsibilities. Guidelines will be forthcoming shortly.
- **Matrix Analysis Project** – In Fiscal Year 2008/09, UMA introduced an academic and administrative “Matrix Analysis Project” to enable data-based decision making to take place at the university. Beginning this year (2011/12), we will initiate a process of preparing comprehensive academic and administrative matrix data reports every other year at UMA. Thank you to faculty and staff for feedback provided regarding the previous process and data points that were used in preparing the initial 2008/09 reports. The Matrix Analysis Reports will be reviewed by the President’s Cabinet and President’s Advisory Council (PAC) as part of our ongoing strategic planning process.
- **Strategic Plan Action Plan** – Under the continuing leadership of strategic plan co-chairs, Dr. Joe Szakas and Dr. Frank Ellis, UMA’s detailed action plan is being developed with a deadline of December 2011. Thank you to our co-chairs, to Carol Kontos, Director of Assessment, and to the other members of the writing team for your important work in writing this operational plan for our Board of Trustees approved strategic plan. As part of our strategic planning process, many units on campus are completing or have completed parallel comprehensive action plans including our new Enrollment Management Plan, Carol Kontos’ Comprehensive Assessment Plan, Joyce Blanchard’s University Advancement Plan and Lauren DuBois’ Technology Plan to name a few.
- **UMA Academic Agenda** – As part of UMA’s Academic Agenda for the current year, several important initiatives are underway.

a) Throughout the summer, Eric Stark has been preparing program approval documents that will be forwarded to the Chancellor for Board of Trustee’s approval of a five-year Bachelor of Architecture degree that will prepare students for the licensure exam.

b) UMA is currently exploring closer academic and administrative collaboration with the Klahr Holocaust and Human Rights Center.

c) In October, UMA will be hosting a visit from employees of Eastern Carolina University to continue UMA's investigation of enhanced globalization and diversity learning experiences for our students. The UMA strategic plan includes this area of study as an element within our academic plan. Thanks to Dr. Ken Elliott who initiated this collaboration with ECU last year. Thanks also to Dr. Frank Ellis who is facilitating the participation of UMA's Faculty Senate in this collaboration.

d) Based upon input from many faculty members, UMA will engage in a UMS discussion to clarify the current relationship between UMA and University College.

e) Under the leadership of Dr. Tom Abbott, UMA's NEASC liaison officer, and in collaboration with Carol Kontos and Dr. Frank Ellis, we are preparing the comprehensive mid-term report for NEASC. Thank you to everyone who is engaged in the writing of this important accreditation document.

f) Thank you to Dr. Jodi Williams for chairing our Distance Learning Committee and providing leadership in developing UMA's eLearning vision.

- **UMA Adjunct Faculty** – Adjunct faculty provide significant academic and professional support for many of UMA's associate and baccalaureate degree programs. Among UMA's newest adjuncts, we are pleased to welcome former Maine Attorney General, Janet Mills, and former Maine Commissioner of Labor, Laura Fortman.
- **Baldrige Improvement Committee** Dr. Margaret Patterson and Dr. Brenda McAleer have agreed to co-chair the upcoming Baldrige Improvement Committee that will make recommendations regarding the category of "Workforce Focus. Thank you to Dr. Diane Boone, Shani Barlow, Sheila Crowley, Jamie Bolduc, Dr. Sheila Bennett and Laurie Ficker for agreeing to serve on the committee and to David Lane who will serve as the Human Resources liaison to the group.
- **EpsCor** – The National Science Foundation funds the Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EpsCor). Last year for the first time, UMA received from the Maine EpsCor project, a planning grant to support the development of faculty research. I am pleased to announce that Dr. Chris Lage and Dr. Peter Milligan have received EpsCor funding to support their joint research project.
- **Women, Work and Community** – Congratulations to Women, Work and Community for receiving a significant endowment gift from an anonymous donor to support their continued work.

- **UMA Public Policy Forum** – I am pleased to announce that beginning this fall, UMA will host a new Public Policy Forum entitled “Capital Ideas.” Designed to engage the greater Augusta community in a discussion of relevant policy issues, this initiative will be directed by Elizabeth “Libby” Mitchell, former President of the Senate and former Speaker of the House in the Maine Legislature. UMA will bring together policy makers from the Executive, Legislative and Judicial branches of government, as well as nationally recognized experts in a variety of topical areas. The first event which will focus on health care quality, costs and consumer needs.
- **Bend the Trend Wellness Initiative** – The University of Maine System “Bend the Trend” task force completed its work and provided recommendations to the Chancellor and the Board of Trustees. Thank you to Sheri Stevens and Tim Pinkham who represented UMA on the task force. Principal among those recommendations was a charge to implement a campus based wellness program at each university. I have asked Sheri Stevens to chair UMA’s wellness program initiative.
- **Alternative Spring Break** - Congratulations to UMA’s student life staff for our 10th anniversary Habitat for Humanity “Alternative Spring Break” program.
- **Military & Veterans Affairs Initiative** – Amy Line, Sheri Fraser and colleagues have completed our prestigious ACE-Walmart Foundation grant project to enhance UMA’s military and veterans outreach. UMA has continued to fund staff and resource support for this initiative beyond the seed funding provided by the grant.
- **University Advancement & Alumni Relations** – Congratulations to Joyce Blanchard and Staci Warren for continuing to steadily build UMA’s very new friend-raising and fundraising programs. One important highlight of Joyce’s work involves the creation of mini-capital campaigns for specific academic programs such as the highly successful dental clinic fundraising effort. A donor tree is showcased in the new clinic lobby to recognize the generosity of individuals, foundations and federal contributions to the new facility. A similar approach is being developed for the architecture program.
- **Teaching Through Technology Task Force (T4)** – Thank you to Dr. Ken Elliott for co-chairing this system-wide initiative initiated by AFUM and convened by the Chancellor. This fall faculty will be invited to participate in a descriptive (not evaluative) survey that will attempt to quantify data related to the impact of technology on teaching and learning at UMA. More details will follow but I encourage all faculty to participate.
- **New UMA Processes and Procedures** – Kudos to Sherry McCollett and her staff for implementing new and improved financial aid packaging procedures, yielding a much larger class of first year students. Thanks to Matt Canwell and his staff in Student Accounts for producing refund checks owed to students prior to the start of the semester.

Reality Check

In the midst of our appropriate celebration of the many accomplishments of our students, faculty, staff and alumni, we must acknowledge the realities of the continuing state and national fiscal crisis. UMA and the UMS have been directed by the Governor's Office to prepare for the potential of additional rescissions to our state appropriation. Continuing cuts to the federal budget will also impact our students who rely upon federal food and childcare support. Federal Pell funding is in serious jeopardy which has a dramatic negative impact on our students. Approximately 80% of UMA's students qualify for some level of Pell support.

Conclusion

Inspiration exists all around us if we take a moment to stop, look and listen. I am inspired when I look at all that we accomplished together last year to serve our students and to advance UMA's quest for excellence. I am inspired by working with the very best colleagues in the world who daily demonstrate both dedication and diligence in carrying out our many collective responsibilities. I am inspired by colleagues who, last year, made important and often challenging personal decisions to live a healthier life by changing eating patterns, enhancing exercise routines, giving up smoking, going back to school or dealing with mental health challenges. I am inspired by the students who succeed at UMA due to their own tenacity but also due to the knowledge, care and support that they receive from UMA faculty and staff.

As we begin this academic year, let us pledge collectively that we will deliberately look for inspiration and deliberately try to be the inspiration for others. If we do so, then in the abridged words of Emerson, we will have "filled our niche" and we will ultimately "leave the world better than we found it."

