

# UMaine Athletics receives \$1.5 million award from Alfond Foundation

October 31, 2016

The University of Maine has received a \$1.5 million, three-year award from the Harold Alfond Foundation to support UMaine Athletics.

The award establishes the Alfond Fund in the University of Maine Foundation, focused on creating a centralized fundraising structure for UMaine Athletics and continuing support of the football program.

“Through the years, Harold Alfond and the Harold Alfond Foundation have helped the University of Maine achieve excellence in Division I athletics for Maine, and for our fan base on campus, statewide and beyond,” says University of Maine President Susan J. Hunter. “This newest award further underscores the leadership role of UMaine Athletics, and will be a game-changer for fundraising and friendraising going forward.”

Through a three-year unrestricted grant of \$750,000, UMaine will establish the Alfond Fund, a comprehensive, centralized annual giving program designed to increase the visibility of UMaine Athletics and encourage donor support. The new program, featuring streamlined options for giving, greater constituent engagement and membership-based benefits plan, and development of signature events for athletics, will launch in spring 2017.

This portion of the grant, which will encourage giving to all 17 UMaine sports programs, will be the springboard to significantly increase overall giving to Black Bear athletics.

UMaine also will receive a three-year grant of \$750,000 to continue the Harold Alfond Football Challenge. Since 2007, the Harold Alfond Foundation has awarded annual one-to-one matching challenge grants in support of UMaine football of up to \$250,000.

“The foundation wholeheartedly endorses the university’s efforts to coordinate all athletic fundraising through the Alfond Fund,” says Greg Powell, chairman of the Harold Alfond Foundation. “The structure will streamline and enhance giving for the benefit of all the university’s varsity athletic teams.”

Through the years, the Alfonds' support of UMaine Athletics has totaled more than \$15 million in gifts and pledges. Through challenge grants, further donor support has been leveraged to benefit student-athletes, and their sports programs and UMaine fans.

UMaine Athletics has more than 400 student-athletes who currently play for the Black Bears, over 18,000 student-athlete alumni worldwide and over 4,500 season ticket holders.

"These grants will bring transformational change to our athletic annual giving," says UMaine Athletics Director Karlton Creech. "This support provides an unprecedented opportunity to make critical changes to provide the most effective donor-centered annual giving program for UMaine Athletics."

Contact: Margaret Nagle, 207.581.3745