



**Remarks of Gregory W. Powell
Harold Alfond Foundation**

**Blaine House
Augusta, Maine
January 23, 2012**

*Announcement of the Harold Alfond Foundation's Gift
to the Maine Community College System and Good Will-Hinckley*

Good morning and thank you, Commissioner Bowen, for that introduction—and congratulations on the launch of the exciting new strategic plan for education in Maine. And thank you, Governor, for welcoming us all to the Blaine House.

Fellow trustee Bill Alfond and I are honored to be here with so many distinguished state leaders.

The renowned Maine statesman, James G. Blaine, whose name graces this handsome home, once said that “there is no Republican, no Democrat on the 4th of July—all are Americans. And all feel that their country is greater than Party.”

Over one hundred years later, Harold Alfond—an avid sportsman—loved to say that “teamwork wins games.”

This morning, the results of teamwork and placing the best interests of education first are evident in our state.

Today is a 4th of July for Maine education thanks to a great team effort led by Governor LePage, our Legislature, Commissioner Bowen, President John Fitzsimmons of the Maine Community College System, Good Will Hinckley President Glenn Cummings, their Boards and supporters.

This morning, there was a closing. After months of hard work and planning by these leaders, their staffs and many of you here in this room, 13 buildings and 600 acres of land on the Good Will Hinckley campus have been dedicated to the expansion of our Community College System, an expansion that will allow the Kennebec Valley Community College to serve 2,000 more Maine citizens seeking higher education.

And this expanded Community College will be located right next to, and will partner with, Good Will's newly launched Academy of Natural Sciences—a high school for Maine kids who need an alternative path to learning and a school we hope will soon become the first charter school in our state's history.

Congratulations to all of you on this outstanding team effort.

This morning, we will hear more about the exciting plans and promise for this initiative. But first, on behalf of the Alford Foundation, I would like to share a few thoughts about Harold Alford and make a special announcement.

Harold Alford valued the ideal of education—the opportunities education provides young people and the importance of an educated citizenry to our well being as a society. He understood at the most basic level that having a good job and doing a good job come first in life and that education is key to getting and keeping a good job. He believed that every Maine citizen should have access to and aspirations for a quality education and that, in a world of fierce competition from emerging economies, higher education is no longer a luxury—it's a necessity.

And he was concerned, as we all are today, that too many young people are failing in our public schools and too few are going on to higher education when the workforce needs of our economy require citizens with the skills higher education offers.

In the last year of his remarkable life, Harold visited Good Will Hinckley to dedicate a new residential cottage for Good Will kids. On this visit, he urged all Maine young people to work hard and go on to college.

Today, he would be delighted in knowing that our Community College System will be able to give 2,000 more Maine people affordable access to higher education and that the Good Will Hinckley school is providing a new, hands-on education to kids who might otherwise fall behind.

He would be delighted in knowing that these two institutions will not only be neighbors, but partners, creating opportunities for Good Will students to access and transition into our Community College System.

And he would imagine, as we do today, that pathways to college for all our citizens will someday be as clear and as seamless as a farm field at Hinckley covered with snow.

Harold Alfond also knew that promising initiatives, to succeed, require winners to lead them. And just look at winners in this room:

- A strong, effective business-minded Governor, who just happens to be a Republican.
- A committed and tireless CEO of Good Will Hinckley, who just happens to be a Democrat and former Speaker of the Maine House who left the Department of Education in Washington to lead the rebirth of Good Will.
- A Community College System President, John Fitzsimmons—Fitz, as we call him. Here is a guy who, over a decade of extraordinary leadership, has built the Community College System enrollment from 10,000 to over 18,000 students. And has been recognized from Maine to California as the finest Community College System President in America.
- And then there is President Barbara Woodley and Commissioner Bowen and the Leadership of our Legislature and.....well I guess I better stop before I leave too many people out.

Anyway, with winners like this teaming up and leading the way, Harold Alfond—if he were here with us today—would be cheering and....pulling out his check book. [And I don't mean for political contributions.]

Which brings us to our announcement.

On behalf of the Harold Alfond Foundation, we are honored to announce our grant to the Maine Community College System and Good Will of \$10.85 million dollars.

Of this amount, \$8.35 million dollars will be for capital improvements to the new Community College Campus.

The balance of the Foundation's gift—\$2.5 million—will provide operational support for Good Will's Academy of Natural Sciences.

But, in the tradition of Harold Alfond, \$1 million of the \$2.5 million dollars is a challenge and will be paid to Good Will—as a bonus—on the day Good Will achieves state certification as Maine's first charter school.

We can't wait to write the check!

In closing, and by way of introduction, I want to say a few words about our state's Governor.

There is no one who better understands the positive difference that a quality education centered on a student's natural gifts can have on the life of a young person than Paul LePage.

Governor: From poverty, abuse, homelessness, and despair, to a college degree and MBA, and from business to the Blaine House and outstanding service to our state in the toughest of times, your personal journey and accomplishment are not only inspiring, but proof that all young people, with a little help, can succeed and make a difference.

Thank you for all you do.

Today in Maine, as in 1959 on the streets of Lewiston, there are still homeless kids; there are kids for whom our education system is not working; there are adults, young and old, with families to support and the desire to succeed but without the skills required for today's jobs.

These citizens need us and we need them.

Providing new pathways for learning, expanding college access for all our citizens to give them the skills and education needed in these tough times and beyond is what today's vision for an expanded Community College System and a reborn Good Will school is all about.

On behalf of the Harold Alfond Foundation, I want to thank the Governor and everyone here for your vision and support of this effort and for letting me share a few words with you this morning.

It's my pleasure to turn the podium over to our Governor.