



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

Harvest on the Square – Waterville, Maine

November 10, 2015

Good evening, and thank you, Nick, for your kind words. And a special thanks to Bill and Vicky Mitchell for organizing this fabulous event and for your outstanding leadership in this town.

On behalf of the Harold Alfond Foundation, Bill Alfond, Joan Alfond, Jarod Deanis and I are honored to be here as we celebrate the Waterville community and the promise of what is to come.

This town has seen difficult days. But as we can feel in the air this evening, the future is bright as we envision a renewed, more robust Main Street filled with restaurants, shops, art galleries, students, a new hotel, and ever more businesses of all stripes.

Beyond Main Street, we see the only combined Boys' and Girls' Club and YMCA in the nation, a nationally-recognized Educare program for pre-school kids, the fabulous Lunder art collection, Colby College and Thomas College each reaching new levels of excellence, a re-energized business community fully engaged, and new jobs coming to Waterville.

Harold Alfond loved team work, and Waterville's future is all about the team work and the leadership on display tonight.

When Bill Mitchell asked me to say a few words, he asked if I would speak about Waterville and the arts. Given Harold Alfond's love and legendary support of athletics, Bill's request seemed a little challenging....some would say a disconnect.

As Opera House board chair, Jim LaLiberty, told me, Alfond and the arts is sort of like June and Ward Cleaver making an appearance on Naked and Afraid.

But Harold Alfond, and today his Foundation, became supporters of the arts, and I would like to tell you how that came to be, how grateful we are to Waterville's art organizations, and why we are so excited about supporting Waterville arts going forward.

In the fall of 1999, while sitting at his card table overlooking Great Pond, Harold Alfond was opening his mail. He came upon a letter written by his long-time friend and attorney, Bob Marden. In addition to Bob's many other talents, Bob had a knack for drawing. If you put Bob in a board room of hot air, Bob could sketch the Mona Lisa in less than five minutes. And so when Harold opened the letter from Bob, it was not the short note from Bob asking Harold to expand his philanthropy from athletics and make a donation to the Waterville Opera House that caught Harold's eye.

Rather, knowing that a picture says a thousand words, and knowing his love for athletics and the great contributions the Waterville Opera House was making to the Waterville community, Bob had enclosed a drawing for Harold. The drawing was of City Hall, home of our historic Opera House. And draped eloquently across the front of City Hall, Bob had sketched a giant jock strap.

Speaking of building banners, you may have noticed the new "Waterville Creates" banner on the corner of the center building. As you may know, Waterville Creates! has become the town's hub of art leadership, bringing together all of Waterville's major arts organizations.

The Maine Film Center, the Opera House, Common Street Arts, the Colby College Museum of Art, Waterville Main Street, and the Waterville Public Library.

These organizations have banded together with a goal to coordinate programming, marketing, back office functions and more.

Waterville Creates! exemplifies what Harold Alfond knew and as we all know this evening: with limited financial resources, we can accomplish greater things by working together than by flying solo.

Today under the leadership of its chairman, Larry Sterrs and its executive director, Nate Rudy, Waterville Creates! has an energetic staff of Marie, Kika and Dick Dyer and we, at the Foundation, are most grateful to them, and to the board of Waterville Creates! and the boards, volunteers and employees of all of our city's arts organizations.

Tonight, beyond the arts, we see team work alive and well in Waterville everywhere, and we see great leadership with—to name just a few—Nick Isgro, our new Mayor; the presidents of our colleges, Laurie Lachance, David Greene and Rick Hopper;

Kim Lindloff, our Chamber's president; and business leaders like Bill and Vicky Mitchell. And, last but not least, Bill's uncle, who I have been told has shown a little leadership in his lifetime after playing basketball for Waterville High School. Thank you all for your efforts.

Since 1952, Harold and Bibby Alfond held Waterville dear in their hearts.

Together with their family, they helped support this town and its great institutions. Looking to the future as Waterville reinvents itself, you can count on Harold's Foundation to do its part. When this community steps forward and rolls up its sleeves, the Foundation will step up to match your efforts.

Harold Alfond loved to say, "Don't tell me, show me". So, let us close with a *show* of the Foundation's support for Waterville.

In the last 14 months, the Foundation has committed funding for Waterville Creates! and its art teammates in the amount \$1.5 million dollars. And tonight we brought along another check for Larry and Nate.

It is now my pleasure to introduce the outstanding president of Thomas College, Laurie Lachance