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## HAROLD ALFOND FOUNDATION COMMITS \$2 MILLION TO WATERVILLE OPERA HOUSE RENOVATION AND EXPANSION

Portland, Maine, April 28, 2010 ö The Harold Alfond Foundation has announced a grant of \$2 million in support of the Waterville Opera House renovation and expansion project. Consistent with Mr. Alfond's preference for awarding matching challenge grants as a way to build community partnerships and to inspire and leverage additional giving by others, the Foundation will match every dollar raised by the Opera House for the project, up to a total of \$2,000,000.

öThe City of Waterville was Harold Alfond's hometown for many years,ö said Greg Powell, Chairman of the Foundation's Board of Trustees, öand perhaps no institution in Waterville embodies the city's rich cultural history like the Waterville Opera House.ö For over 100 years the Opera House has been a cultural beacon in Central Maine, entertaining audiences with its exciting lineup of productions. The Opera House's impact extends beyond its theater stage. Sold out shows boost the sales of local businesses and stimulate the economy. Area children and teens participate in the Opera House's Arts in Education programs. Strong and mutually beneficial partnerships exist with Colby College, local hospitals and businesses, and the City of Waterville.

Powell noted, öThe Opera House is an asset to the community and a historical and architectural gem for the state ö but it is in need of renovation and expansion. We are delighted to be a part of the effort to ensure that the Opera House will continue to entertain the people of Central Maine for generations to come.ö

## **About the Harold Alfond Foundation**

Founded in 1950, The Harold Alfond Foundation furthers the philanthropic legacy of Harold Alfond, the founder of Dexter Shoe Company and a longtime supporter of Maine communities in which he and his family worked and resided. Harold Alfond awarded matching challenge grants to organizations to foster collaboration and to inspire and leverage additional giving by others. He ensured that his philanthropy would live on by committing nearly all of his wealth to the Foundation, which continues to support charitable causes in the State of Maine.

Consistent with Harold Alfond's own giving pattern and philanthropic principles, the Foundation favors education, healthcare, youth development, and other selected charitable causes. The Foundation honors Harold Alfond's business approach to funding decisions, his belief in teamwork, and his love of competition by continuing to award matching challenge grants to projects that meet a demonstrable need, are entrepreneurial, promote teamwork, have measurable performance outcomes, are financially viable, and have quality management and board leadership.

Major philanthropic investments have been made to:

- Construct athletic fields and facilities for many public and private colleges and universities and private secondary schools in the State of Maine, including:
  - Harold Alfond Hockey Rink, Alfond Outdoor Track, and Harold Alfond Stadium at Colby College
  - Alfond Hockey Arena and Harold Alfond Sports Stadium at the University of Maine
  - Harold Alfond Student Recreation Center at St. Joseph's College
  - Alfond Athletic Center at Thomas College
  - Alfond Athletic Center and artificial turf field at Kents Hill School
- Establish the first in the nation Harold Alfond College Challenge program, which offers college scholarship grants of \$500 to every baby born in Maine;
- Build the Harold Alfond Center for Cancer Care, which consolidated MaineGeneral Medical Center's cancer care programs in Central Maine into a single 59,000-square-foot facility, equipped with the latest technology, and designed to offer multi-specialty treatment and care coordination;
- Establish and endow the Alfond Youth Center, the nation's only combined Boys & Girls Club/YMCA;

- Construct the University of New England's Center for Health Sciences, which houses Maine's only state-based medical school; and,
- Create a Children's Garden at the Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens.

### **About the Waterville Opera House**

Built in 1902 and designed by George Adams, the Waterville Opera House is a municipally owned 925-seat theatre located in Waterville, Maine. Over the years, the Waterville Opera House has hosted the finest touring performances and first-run movies. In 1973 the Waterville Opera House Improvement Association was founded. Since then more than \$1 million has been raised locally to renovate and upgrade the historic facility. Today, the Waterville Opera House is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and continues to produce some of the finest shows in regional theater.