



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **HAROLD ALFOND FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES GIFT TO THE MAINE COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM AND GOOD WILL-HINCKLEY**

**Augusta, Maine** – The Harold Alfond Foundation today announced a \$10.85 million gift to the Maine Community College System (MCCS) and to the Good Will-Hinckley (GWH) school in Hinckley, Maine.

The Foundation's gift will enable the Maine Community College System to expand the capacity of Kennebec Valley Community College in Fairfield by an additional 1,500 to 2,000 students through the purchase of 600 acres and 13 buildings at Good Will-Hinckley. By assisting the Maine Community College System in purchasing the property, the gift will help Good Will-Hinckley reopen and support its new Maine Academy of Natural Sciences, a magnet high school offering residential and day programs focused on agriculture, sustainability, forestry, and environmental studies.

"We are delighted to be able to support the Maine Community College System, an institution so vitally important to bringing higher educational opportunities to the people of Maine," said Greg Powell, Chairman of the Foundation's Board of Trustees. "That we can assist the Maine Community College System and Kennebec Valley Community College while also investing in the future of Good Will-Hinckley, makes this gift a win-win. We applaud Governor LePage, President Fitzsimmons, and Glenn Cummings for demonstrating extraordinary leadership in facilitating this transaction."

In addition to the Foundation's \$10.85 million gift, and with the support of Governor LePage and key lawmakers, the State of Maine has appropriated \$750,000 to the Maine Community College System to support annual operating costs at the new campus, and \$530,000 annually to Good Will-Hinckley to fund operating costs for the Academy's residential program.

"These were wise investments that will have long-term effects on our youth and our economy," said Governor LePage. "By 2018, nearly 60 percent of all jobs in Maine will require post secondary education. Currently, we have a 20 percent drop-out rate. We can do better. Students deserve better. But we must be willing to blaze a new trail and find out what works best for our kids. It's all about our students and offering them a chance to succeed."

The Foundation's gift to the Maine Community College System and Good Will-Hinckley comes at a time when the economic mission of education – to prepare students for the workforce – is more important than ever. This is especially true in Maine, where only 37% of the population has completed a college credential. The Maine Community College System is meeting this challenge head on – with 93% of its graduates placed in jobs or continuing their education and 85% of its programs being the only ones available in Maine.

Maine's community colleges are some of the fastest growing in the nation. Together, the seven schools have grown 83% in the past nine years, from 10,127 students to over 18,500. However, last year, the colleges were unable to enroll over 4,000 students in their preferred program of study.

Kennebec Valley Community College has doubled in size in the past decade (to over 2,500 students) and has limited room to expand on its Fairfield campus, which the college will continue to operate and which is located eight miles from the new campus. The Maine Community College System's acquisition of Good Will-Hinckley property will enable KVCC to address its immediate capacity issues and help meet the state's workforce development needs in the future.

The property includes an academic building, modern recreation center, organic farm, and a number of other buildings. Initially, Kennebec Valley Community College anticipates locating several of its programs at the new campus, including line-worker technology. The college also intends for the property's organic farm to become home to the state's first associate degree program in agricultural sciences.

“Harold Alfond dreamed bigger than most of us, and through his foundation his big dreams continue with this remarkable gift to the people of Maine,” said MCCS President John Fitzsimmons in expressing his appreciation for the gift. “This investment will create a new college campus and will mean that 1,500 to 2,000 more Maine people have access to a college education. It is a gift that will transform the lives of generations of Maine people.”

The total value of the transaction being announced today is \$15.35 million. Of the \$10.85 million Harold Alfond Foundation gift, \$8.35 million will be awarded to the Maine Community College System for capital improvements to the new Kennebec Valley Community College campus, including \$5 million to construct a new wing on the Averill/Alfond school and \$3.35 million for campus upgrades and infrastructure. In addition, \$1 million will be directed to the MCCS in support of its \$4 million acquisition of the land and property at Good Will Hinckley. The balance of the Foundation's gift – \$1.5 million – will be allocated to Good Will-Hinckley to support school operations and the school's needs in the future, including the funding of scholarships. A critical part of completing the transaction was a gift of \$2.5 million from the newly formed Foundation for Maine's Community Colleges.

The Maine Community College System's acquisition of the property, coupled with Good Will-Hinckley's rebirth as a natural sciences-themed high school with a residential option, has paved the way for an educational partnership among the parties to provide young people with a clear path and the necessary resources to successfully transition from high school to college, and on to the workforce.

The September 2011 launch of the Maine Academy of Natural Sciences represents a new chapter in the history of Good Will-Hinckley, which has served youth and their families for over 120 years. In 2009, the organization was forced to suspend most of its programs, following a shift in state and federal funding.

“Today begins a new era at our historic institution, one that will transform the lives of a new generation of Maine’s young people. I have no doubt that George Walter Hinckley would be proud of the stewardship of his legacy, which we are securing today,” said Glenn Cummings, Ed.D., President of Good Will-Hinckley. “We are so grateful to the Harold Alfond Foundation, Maine Community College System, Governor Paul LePage, and the State Legislature for recognizing the asset this campus is to the state of Maine and what it can mean for Maine’s future.”

The new Academy is the culmination of a broad strategic planning process involving close to 500 stakeholders and volunteers, and led by Larry Sterrs, a former chair of the school’s board, and Kathryn Hunt, the current board chair. The school will continue the legacy that Reverend George Walter Hinckley started in 1889, with a new focus on hands-on, project-based, and theme oriented learning designed to prepare students to live successful lives as they continue their education and career training. The school currently enrolls 20 students and is currently accepting applications for next year. Projected enrollment of day and residential students is over 40 for next year and is expected to grow to 200 in the next decade.

The announcement of the Foundation’s gift to Good Will-Hinckley follows two significant developments of the state level, including funding for its residential program and the passage of charter school legislation. In regard to the latter, \$1 million of the Harold Alfond Foundation support will be awarded upon the Academy’s successful designation as a charter school under Maine’s new charter school legislation.

### **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 build community partnerships 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 applies 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.

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