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University oversight of fraternities questioned

After Gorham standoff officials review campus safety policies

Sam Hill
Managing Editor

Last Wednesday's Gorham standoff between local police and an armed USM student, Alan-Michael Santos, has raised a lot of questions about the university's policies and procedures during emergency situations.

Santos, 23, of Winchester, Mass., a junior business marketing major, surrendered to authorities after a four-hour standoff with police, in which he barricaded himself in the Sigma Nu fraternity house on School Street in Gorham. Members of the fraternity called police after they evacuated the building when Santos, who was intoxicated, became belligerent while carrying a firearm. Authorities report that he will be charged with terrorizing and criminal threatening with a firearm.

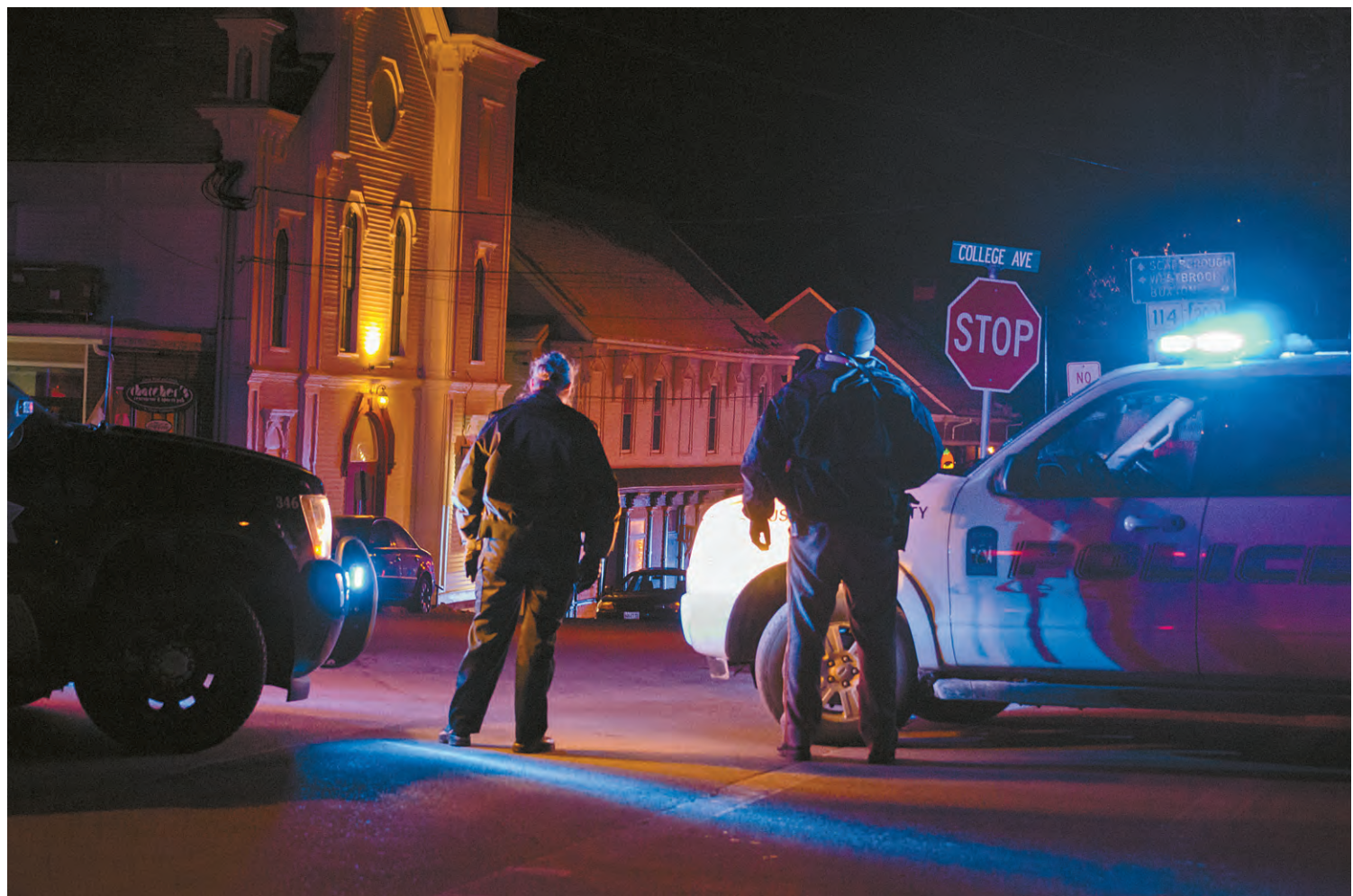
No injuries were reported, but the university is taking a look at the situation and how prepared it was for it.

The Gorham incident has not only prompted community members to ask about emergency procedures, but also about the university's control and administration over its two off-campus fraternities. Further investigation into university policy for its fraternities shows that the university does not prohibit students from carrying firearms or weapons in its fraternity houses.

According to the Dean of Students office, any dangerous weapons, from firearms to slingshots, "are not permitted on property owned by or under the control of the University of Southern Maine and off-campus activities sponsored by the University of Southern Maine." But this policy does not apply to the residents of the Sigma Nu house, according to Executive Director of Student Life Joy Pufhal.

"We don't own or control that property," said Pufhal. "The current university policy does not prohibit the possession of weapons in off-campus housing. The way the weapons policy is written, they are not in violation."

The Sigma Nu and Delta Chi fraternity houses are not owned by USM, but by a housing corporation that takes care of the property specifically for use by Greek life,



Jusiticia Barreiros / Sports Editor

The street was blocked off throughout Wednesday night's standoff, which was called in at 8 p.m. At 9:55 p.m. SWAT vehicles surrounded the Sigma Nu house, and stayed until 11:41 when the standoff was resolved with no reported injuries sustained.

so USM does not have complete control over these properties. The only point at which the university intervenes in activities at these locations is when the fraternities plan events at the houses.

When fraternities are planning any event at the residence that will be attended by more than 15 guests, they are required to register the event with Coordinator of Student Activities & Greek Life Dan Welter. Welter then visits the house to go over risk management and underage drinking policies with the house residents.

"I go down, usually an hour or so before their event is scheduled, and speak with designated brothers about the event," said Welter. "We check in to make sure they're checking IDs and that that person is certified to do so. Guests need to be signed in. There need to be designated sober brothers to help escort students back to campus. Things like that."

Other than these meetings, the houses are only ever checked on for an annual security and fire safety inspection, which mainly deals with town of Gorham ordinances and building codes, or if there are criminal situations on the premises. While these are off-campus residences, they are recognized in USM's "Annual Security Report and Annual Fire Safety Report" as living facilities of student organizations. The report states that, "through an interagency agreement between the Gorham Police Departments and Public Safety, information related to crime activity associated with these student organization, off-campus facilities is reported to USM Public Safety."

According to authorities, during a search of the fraternity on Thursday morning, investigators found two handguns.

Since the fraternity houses are officially recognized in the annual safety report as student organiza-



Photo courtesy of Cumberland County Sheriff's Office

Alan-Michael Santos

tion facilities, one would think that they would fall under the USM weapons policy that covers "off-campus activities sponsored by the University of Southern Maine." However, this is not the case.

When asked to explain the con-

fusion in semantics between the safety report and the USM weapon policy, Welter explained that there is, according to the University of Maine System's interpretation, an ambiguity of phrasing that means that fraternity houses cannot be held to on-campus policies.

"That [the weapons policy] was one of the first pieces of policy that we looked through, and went, yeah, that's a violation," said Welter. But, he said, according to the system, what students do primarily in frat houses, that is "living," is not a student activity. Therefore, they're not covered under the umbrella of "off-campus student activities" that are controlled by the university.

When asked if the off-campus fraternities were controlled by the university and if they should be, Welter said no, he didn't think the university should be in control because of amount of responsibility

See GORHAM on page 4

Students stand in solidarity against pipeline

Sidney Dritz
News Editor

TransCanada's Keystone XL Pipeline is drawing objections from a range of USM students, staff and faculty, perhaps most dramatically when a handful of students were involved in a protest recently that culminated in two arrests.

Last Wednesday, a group of between 12 and 24 people, at different points in time, stood at the entrance to the 481 Congress St. branch of TD Bank to protest the bank's investment in the Keystone XL oil pipeline, which is intended to carry tar sands oil between Canada and Texas. A press release was sent out 40 minutes after the protest began by the Maine Trans and/or Women's Action Team, the group that organized the event. The group, according to member Meaghan LaSala, a junior women and gender studies major, is organized around a shared political vision on a range of issues including decolonization, environmental justice and gender equality. LaSala said the group's intention was to stand in solidarity with communities living along the southern leg of the KXL Pipeline, which runs through the southwestern United States.

A second press release sent out by the Maine Trans and/or Women's Action Team at 2:47 p.m. reported the arrest of two protesters who had chained themselves to the doors of the bank. LaSala later identified the protesters as Betsey Catlin and Sylvia Stormwalker, both of whom, she said, were from Maine but had strong ties to the areas affected by the southern section of the pipeline.

Catlin and Stormwalker were both later released.

"We support everyone's right to safely and respectfully protest. TD is committed to providing a safe environment for our employees and customers," TD Bank Media Relations Associate Lauren Moyer said when the Free Press approached TD for comment. When emailed a question about Catlin and Stormwalker's arrest, Moyer did not respond.

The group targeted TD Bank as one of the top two investors in the pipeline through investment in TransCanada, the company that owns the pipeline. "TD Bank supports responsible energy development. We employ rigorous due diligence in our financing and investing activities relating to energy production," Moyer said. "At TD, we carry out environmental initiatives where we can drive the greatest results -- they are energy efficiency, and growing and protecting forests," she said.

"Many people know and are talking about the northern leg of the pipeline," said LaSala. She went on to explain that while objections to the northern section of the pipeline have stayed its opening for now, that delay was contingent on the opening of the southern part, which was set to begin operation on Wednesday. The northern section of the pipeline would stretch from Alberta, Canada through Nebraska before merging with the existing Keystone pipeline. The Maine Trans and/or Women's Action Team, LaSala explained, organized the protest in a show of solidarity with the Oklahoma and Texas communities, which have called for action against the pipeline's pres-



Photo courtesy of Meaghan LaSala

Between 12 and 24 protestors stood for two hours outside TD Bank on Congress Street to raise awareness of the bank's investment in the Keystone XL tar sands oil pipeline. They did so by carrying signs, passing out information and by blocking the bank's entrance. Meaghan LaSala, USM junior women and gender studies major, said of her fellow protestors, "You've got to remember that it was like ten degrees out."

ence in their areas, and the health and environmental hazards it causes.

The call for solidarity by NacSTOP, an East Texas group, cited safety risks as a main concern. "A toxic product will flow through our communities in a pipeline which has been identified as having major flaws."

The protest, which LaSala attended with USM freshman Iris SanGiovanni, is just one of several actions against the pipeline taken by the USM community. "We're going

to be stronger if we remember that we're part of a larger community," LaSala said. The sentiment was echoed by junior math and computer science major Shaun Carland, who has been active in the USM branch of the Divestment movement, and who said he was sorry to have missed Wednesday's protest because he was in class.

Carland described the opening of the southern leg of the pipeline as a wakeup call and alluded to further national action to be taken against

the pipeline which would involve USM students.

More immediately, USM will host a presentation called "Tar Sands Exposed" in Hannaford Hall on Jan. 31, which will feature Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation activist Eriel Deranger and National Geographic photographer Garth Lenz.

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Lab supplies combust, igniting in an empty room

Sidney Dritz
News Editor

Even with the multitude students coming in and out of the Science building during the school week, the most explosive thing to happen in the building last Friday took place in an empty classroom.

A little after 1:00 on Friday, in the bottom corner of a shelving unit in the unused combination lab and classroom 303, something caught on fire. By Saturday, the Portland Fire Department had determined the cause of the fire. "There was a container with some potting soil," said USM Executive Director of Public Affairs Bob Caswell, "And mixed in with it was some fertilizer, and it was covered, and for whatever reason, it resulted in some spontaneous combustion and caught fire."

Caswell said it was so far unknown what the covered soil and fertilizer was being used for. "I guess we'll find out Monday," Caswell said.

Another thing which is expected to be clearer Monday is what the cost of the cleanup from the water damage will be. The sprinkler system was triggered by the smoke before any significant fire damage could be done, but the sprinklers ran for ten minutes, soaking from the third floor and overflowing down to the basement.

According to an email sent by Executive Director of Facilities Management Robert Bertram Friday at 2:50 p.m., informing faculty and



Randy Hazelton / Multimedia Editor

Room 303 of the Science building was the site of the fire when a sealed container of soil and fertilizer spontaneously combusted.

"For whatever reason, it resulted in some spontaneous combustion."

-Bob Caswell
Executive Director of Public Affairs

staff that the fire had happened but was over, cleanup had already begun, less than two hours after the alarm sounded, and fans were in place to dry out the most significant water damage.

There were no classes in progress in that area of the building at the time of the fire, and according to

Executive Director of Student Life Joy Pufhal, laboratory classes taking place shortly afterwards were relocated.

Friday evening, staff from the IT department checked the affected rooms for technological damage. "It doesn't appear that there will be any permanent damage to the floor," Caswell said. The ceiling tiles, on the other hand, will need to be replaced.

Caswell expects an estimate on costs and how long repairs will take by the end of the day Monday, as well as the reason for the sealed container of soil and fertilizer.

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USM hires new associate provost

Shaun Nigro
Contributor

Samantha Langley-Turnbaugh, who is no stranger to USM, has recently been appointed as the associate provost for graduate studies and research, scholarship and creative activity.

Her role in this position entails overseeing research for the university as well as graduate admissions and programs, with a special emphasis on connections to and within the local community.

Langley-Turnbaugh, who has been with USM since 1996, began as a faculty member in environmental science. With a University of Maine bachelor's degree in forest engineering, a University of New Hampshire master's in soil science and a Ph.D. in forest soils from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, she brings with her a keen eye for environmental issues and sustainability, though the scope of her position as provost will certainly reach further.

On the faculty side, she will be involved in connecting like-minded professors for research or related projects. On the graduate side, she will be overseeing programs of interest or relation to acquired degrees. Most importantly, she said her aim is in "trying to find a way to connect with the community," essentially, and pushing to understand how those who come to university and use its resources give back to the Maine community at large.

"Robust graduate programs rel-

evant to the needs of our students and their communities are absolutely critical," said USM Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Michael Stevenson in a university press release regarding the hiring of Langley-Turnbaugh.

"The same holds true for research, broadly defined, that allows our faculty to stay current in their fields and enrich the learning experiences of our students. Dr. Langley-Turnbaugh has the skills and experiences to promote and advance both."

"USM's research and our graduate programs share a special relationship in that both further strengthen competencies, expand perspectives and, ultimately, improve lives," said Langley-Turnbaugh in the same press release.

Currently, Langley-Turnbaugh has been attending what she calls "listening tours" at all of the University campuses, in an attempt to gather information about aspirations and gain a general idea of the directions in which faculty and graduates alike may be leaning.

Having grown up in Kittery, Langley-Turnbaugh's connection to the community of Maine and its unique attachment to the environment runs deep, and her understanding of both environmental sciences and the community at large is a welcome thread in the fabric of the University of Maine system.

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Study finds link between income and achievement

Skyla Gordon
Free Press Staff

A report released January 9th by the Maine Education Policy Research Institute at USM on the impact of poverty on student achievement in Maine shows a clear correlation between poverty rates and how well students perform in the classroom.

One key finding was that as poverty levels increase, student performance decreases. Although this research didn't include student performance in college, Amy Johnson, the assistant director for the Maine Center for Education Policy and a contributor to the report, believes that the data also applies to the University of Maine System.

In another study to which John-

son contributed from September of 2013, poverty was also shown to affect the performance of college students. Of the students who were economically disadvantaged, 53 percent were characterized as "not persisting or not success[ful]," as opposed to the 40 percent who were not economically disadvantaged. According to the report, a student qualifying as "persisting or success[ful]" was defined as one who earned 24 credit hours in the first year of college with at least a 2.0 grade point average and who also returned full-time for the first semester of the second year.

There are plenty of exceptions to the findings of the report. "The fact that students were economically disadvantaged was by no means deterministic. It's not one deciding factor that overshadows

everything else in a student's life. Poverty alone does not determine whether any student will be successful," Johnson said.

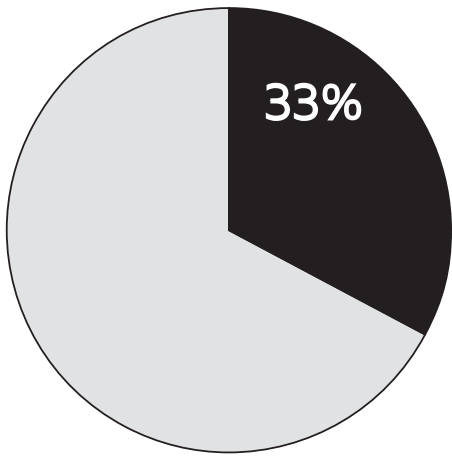
"This was a numerical measure that does not provide much direction for next steps. While it is clear that students who are economically disadvantaged are not

as successful as their peers, it does not provide a clear roadmap for solutions," Johnson said. Johnson believes that more research needs to be done to determine what it is about poverty that leads some students to fail. Without such research she believes it is difficult to determine how best to help these

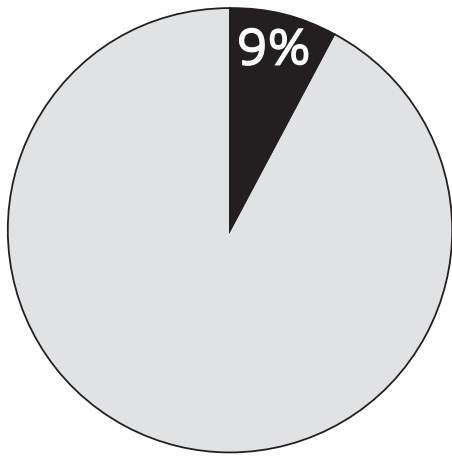
students.

"USM is trying to really increase its role in making college more affordable," said Keith DuBois, director of financial aid at USM. He acknowledged that poverty is an issue in Maine and that USM

See **POVERTY** on page 5



Nationally, only 33% of high school students from low-income households go to college



Only 8% will complete a degree within six years of matriculation

*source: Tauck Family Foundation, 2013

Sokvonnay Chhouk / Design Director

From **GORHAM** on page 1



Justicia Barreiros / Sports Editor

The street was full of police cars surrounding the Sigma Nu fraternity house on Wednesday night, blocking off the road.

it would put on the university.

"It'd be tough," said Welter. "With on-campus students, we have the resources to handle those responsibilities. We have a great team of resident assistants and staff to supervise all sorts of issues that come up."

There are approximately 109 students involved with Greek life at USM. According to residency reports, there are 12 members of Sigma Nu living in their fraternity house and eight Delta Chi members in another.

Currently, residents of the fraternity houses are required to follow a

set of rules outlined in a document titled "Behavioral Guidelines for Recognized Student Organizations Living in Off Campus Houses." This document primarily focuses on noise, property and alcohol violations.

"The issues covered are those we have experienced before," said Welter. "We've dealt with noise and alcohol before, so we know how to handle it. The institution has never had to deal with a situation like this before."

Welter also said that he feels good policies are drafted in response to events like the standoff

incident. The national chapter of Sigma Nu informed Welter that, in their investigation so far, they believe this is an isolated incident.

The morning of the standoff, Executive Director of Public Affairs at USM Bob Caswell spoke with Portland-based news source WMTW 8 regarding active shooters on campus. He assured the station that USM had a plan in place, but he hadn't expected to have to see it in action later that day.

"Given what happened at Purdue [University] yesterday and other recent shootings, they wanted to just ask me about our basic communication [structures] and procedures that we have in place," he said in an interview with the Free Press. "They [WMTW reporters] were asking me, 'Have you ever had a situation with an active shooter?' and I said, 'No, thank God. Let's hope it stays that way.'" He commented that it was a strange coincidence. "Just goes to show that nobody's immune from this kind of thing."

While the campus didn't go into complete lock-down, residential life staff was dispersed around campus to keep students in their residence halls and inform anyone in public buildings, like Bailey Hall and the Costello Sports Complex about the ongoing stand-off.

"The scene was contained [by local authorities]. Students were

encouraged to stay on campus, but give those circumstances we didn't see a need to lock down," said Caswell. He went on to say that if the situation had been different and the event had occurred on campus, there would've been an entirely different response.

"As a student we all received a notice to stay safe and inside, and ResLife worked really well, effectively communicating with everyone to make sure all the residents were doing okay," said junior elementary education major and resident assistant of Robie Andrews Hall Stephanie Brown. "Everyone was a little stressed, but there were no problems or anything."

The university sent out emergency messages through the USM Alert Emergency Warning System, which sends out text messages and emails, and through university mailing lists. Resident students and members of the Greek Life mailing list were contacted, as they were recognized as students who would be directly affected by the stand-off. To receive messages through USM Alert, which is provided by a third-party company called e2Campus, students must sign-up with their contact information beforehand.

"We're currently looking into our mailing lists and how we can make them more efficient," said Welter. "One of the things we're

really focusing on is how we can communicate with other off-campus students in the immediate area during situations like this."

Identifying who needs to be informed about emergency situations on campus is up to the USM Critical Incident Response Team, a group of USM staff members whose goal is to "generate accurate and timely information that helps ensure the safety of the campus community." CIRT has the same communication plan in place for essentially all possible campus emergencies, including natural disaster, fire, active shooter and other violent crimes in progress, as well as some non-emergency situations such as notice of a deceased student, faculty members and off-campus crime that might be relevant to students.

CIRT is responsible for the communication aspect of emergency situations though. According to Executive Director of Student Life Pufhal, the protocol for dealing with the situations when and if they occur is the responsibility of USM Public Safety.

When the Free Press attempted to contact Public Safety regarding protocol for situations involving active shooters on campus, there was no one available who was able to discuss it at any length.

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From **POVERTY** on page 4

has been trying to compensate for this fact by freezing tuition and investing \$4 million in financial aid programs for students.

He cited that currently, 85 percent of first-time full-time students at USM receive financial aid. He added that 42 percent of undergraduate students receive the Pell Grant, a government grant that is awarded to the students who are in most need of assistance. Dubois said the financial aid office is trying to get the most grant money to the neediest of students.

However, the financial aid office does not consider the student's official poverty level when awarding aid. "Not that we don't see students that exhibits signs of poverty, but the way the system is set up we don't look at poverty. We look at financial need and family contribution," DuBois said.

Mike Havlin, a senior economics and business major, is grateful to have his tuition covered by the GI bill due to his father's service in the Marines. Without the pressure of needing to pay tuition he felt that he could concentrate on his education. "I was able to fo-

cus on the academics. I think if all students had that option people would be more engaged with their learning. If we want society to be the best that it can be, we should provide education for everyone," he said.

Johnson hopes that more research will determine additional ways to help Maine students get the aid that they need. Her goal is to find the "best way to provide additional funding that will actually make a difference."

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Police Beat

Selections from the
USM Department of
Public Safety police log
Jan. 8 to Jan. 15

Wednesday, Jan. 8
Close, but no cigar

12:18 p.m. – Odor of marijuana, unable to locate source. – 52 University Way

Thursday, Jan. 9
An electric sheep in wolf's clothing

8:37 p.m. – Odor of marijuana reported, found to be electronic cigarettes. – Dickey Wood Hall, 17 University Way

The devil's lettuce

10:46 p.m. – Summons issued to Mandy Nina L Emery, 18, of Gorham for a useable amount of marijuana. Anderson Hall, 40 Campus Ave.

Friday, Jan. 10
All fingers at ten and two

3:46 p.m. – Warning for texting while driving. – Brighton Ave. by Rosemont

Reduce, re-register, recycle

4:12 p.m. – Warning for expired registration. – 92 Bedford St.

Do not pass go, do not collect \$200

4:23 p.m. – Warning for illegal passing. – Route 25 and Alden Lane

Saturday, Jan. 11
Phantom of the roadside

12:53 p.m. – Report of motor vehicle on the side of the road missing a tire. The vehicle was broken down and operator had the tire. – 37 College Ave.

Girl's got issues[ed]

5:30 p.m. – Summons for not producing a driver's license issued to Jade Gililan, 18, of Portland, and a warning issued for failure to use a turn signal. – 118 Bedford St.

Sunday, Jan. 12
Case of mistaken identity

12:38 p.m. – Reported incident called in to another agency. It was determined that the incident occurred at the University of New England.

Any (re)port in a storm

8:59 p.m. – Report taken for marijuana odor. – Upton Hastings Hall, 52 University Way

Monday, Jan. 13
By royal decree

6:07 p.m. – Subjects removed from parking garage. – Parking garage, 88 Bedford St.

Tuesday, Jan. 14
Like a thief in the night

10:38 a.m. – Theft of university property. – 30 University Way, exterior

Epidemic thievery

10:59 a.m. – Theft of university property. – Costello Complex, 43 Campus Ave.

Was there any left?

11:00 a.m. - Report of damage to university property. – Robie Andrews Hall, 39 University Way

Wednesday, Jan. 15
Crime-lapse delay

11:48 a.m. – After the fact report of criminal trespass. – Glickman Library, 314 Forest Ave.

Police logs are edited for grammar and style. They can be found at usm.maine.edu/police/campus-crime-log.

Arts & Culture



Justicia Barreiros / Sports Editor

A group of students, faculty and community members admire at the works of George Burk, a former USM professor whose art has appeared in over 50 public and corporate collections around the world.

Faculty artists lead students by example

Gorham art gallery opens with new exhibition, featuring the varied collections of current and retired art professors

Courtney Aldrich
Free Press Staff

The Gorham Art Gallery is now featuring the works of USM art faculty, giving them the opportunity to put aside their Powerpoint clickers and pull out a sketch pad to show their students, coworkers and the community their accomplishments and give students the opportunity to learn through appreciation.

This annual event offers USM art students a chance to peruse the halls and walls of a gallery filled with art crafted by the very people who mentor them. The gallery in Gorham, which opened last Thursday, will feature the works of part-time, full-time and retired faculty, with pieces in many different mediums, including sculpture, printmaking, painting and even digital art until mid-February.

ferent mediums, including sculpture, printmaking, painting and even digital art until mid-February.

“The art on display shows a cohesive view of the professional Art Department,” said Director of Exhibitions and Programs Carolyn Eyler.

Freshman art education major and Gorham Art Gallery work study student, Kayla Frost, enjoys seeing her professor’s works on display. “You can look at a piece and you can tell who made it,” said Frost.

The exhibit features nearly two walls of landscape art from over 30 years of work created by retiring associate professor of paint drawing, George Burk. The intent was to show the transition of different art works during Burk’s career at USM.

The faculty art displayed in the Gorham Gallery this semester differs in content mediums from the

“Each piece is representative of the professors themselves.”

-Nathan Cronauer
Biology Major

previous display featured during the fall 2013 semester. “Persian Visions,” which opened at the Gorham Art Gallery mid-October of last year, was purely photographic, while the faculty contri-

butions vary greatly in style and methods.

One interesting contribution uses the arrangement of lighting and adjustment of wall paint in a separate room of the gallery for the full presentation of a photograph transformed into a digital art piece by Raphael DiLuzio, associate professor of digital art and design.

“Each piece is representative of the professors themselves,” said sophomore biology major and Gorham Art Gallery work study student, Nathan Cronauer. “There are so many different vibes from each piece on display.”

“The art show is also useful for the faculty because it provides a supportive environment for innovation of new artistic pieces,” said Eyler.

The art faculty exhibit will be

on display until Feb. 14. The gallery is open from 12 p.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday and is free and open to the public. The next art exhibit at the Gorham Art Gallery will be the student show featuring works from any USM students. That exhibit is scheduled for early March. Submission forms and information will be available at the Gorham Art Gallery.

The final exhibit at the Gorham Art Gallery this semester will be the 2014 BFA and BA Exhibition. Works in this show will be from graduating students.

“The spring semester at the Gorham Art Gallery works from the inside out,” Eyler said.

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Arts & Culture Recommends: the Portland Comedy Showcase

Francis Flisiuk
Arts & Culture Editor

A Wednesday night at Bull Feeney’s on Fore street helps you realize that Portland has more to offer than just its restaurants, breweries and music events. It also has a thriving comedy scene.

Some of the most successful comedians from all over New England gather at the Irish pub every Wednesday for the Portland Comedy Showcase, a night filled with delicious food, craft beer and of course, big laughs.

Upstairs at the historic and picturesque Bull Feeney’s fills with a slightly-buzzed audience for a 90-minute show that easily satisfies the need for a comedic fix. According to Mike Levinsky, comedian, founder and organizer of the showcase, comedy night features four to six different comics as well as some welcome regulars. Apart from sharpening his own stand-up routine he also makes sure to book the best talent around.

“Stage time is valuable, so I make sure to always find somebody experienced and always working on their craft,” said Levinsky.

Every stand-up comedian brings a distinctive comedic style, which adds a level of excitement whenever the host introduces the next comic. Some comedians are dry and sarcastic, while others are crude and crass, but fortunately, all of them are genuinely funny. Will Green is a regular act at the showcase and crowds love his sets

for his relatable anecdotal stories that sometime border on self-deprecating.

“When things happen to me in my real life, at my job, working with kids especially, I can turn that into a story that makes people laugh,” said Green.

Green says that he’s just one of many talented comics who live and work around Portland, a city he believes is a hub for funny people. “If I had to guess, I would say Maine is near the top ten in quality comedians per capita,” said Green. “In a city this small, that’s impressive.”

“Portland is the perfect city for comedy,” said comedian Jerri Stone, a regular at the showcase.



Francis Flisiuk / Arts & Culture Editor

Will Green, a regular on Wednesday nights, performs his set that includes personal and hilarious stories to an audience of comedy fans.

See COMEDY on page 7

From COMEDY on page 6



Francis Flisiuk / Arts & Culture Editor

Mark Turcotte, the host of the 90 minute show, greets the guests while opening with a few jokes of his own.

Stone started in the comedy scene in the late '80s and after 30 years, performing has become just another part of her life. According to Stone, comedy is a chance to kick bigger things in the shins, and it shows in her style in her playful attacks on controversial issues.

"As I age, life just keeps getting more and more hilarious," said Stone. "Comedy is kind of like a sore tooth. You notice it, and then you just can't leave it alone."

For many performers, comedy is a chance to share experiences, address social problems and according to Levinsky even boost their own confidence. For Levinsky the vibes and laughter from the crowd are the only motivation he needs to keep doing comedy. "The laughs are intoxicating. The great feeling you get from instant

positive feedback on your work can last for days," said Levinsky.

With the type of amicable talent Levinsky constantly has in the show, the Portland Comedy Showcase is like listening to a group of witty storytellers, who also happen to make your sides hurt from laughing. The comedians all seem very comfortable on stage and show a mastery of their own jokes. It's this familiarity with their material that gives the comedians room to play with their delivery, which often results in laughter even before they reach the punch line.

"You'll probably catch these guys on Comedy Central in five years, but for now, see them at Bull Feeney's in Portland," said Levinsky.

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The Brown Clouds of Courage: The Musical
by philip hobby, johnny speckman, and nate speckman
Three couples each wrestle with unique and absurd challenges in their relationships.

Act One, Scene Two
plays by askari, britt, gage, guffey, kimball, pearson, and sanders
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Temporary Living Arrangements
by elizabeth lardie
Death is no laughing matter... Unless it's the only thing left to do.

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Perspectives

Our Opinion

Ensuring student safety

USM has seen more than its fair share of breaking news this week. From the arrest of a former USM student body president for arson on Monday and a Gorham standoff between police and an armed student Wednesday night, to an incident of spontaneous combustion in the science building on Friday.

Two of these events have something in common: they involve members of a USM fraternity. Wednesday night's standoff occurred inside Sigma Nu, one of two USM-affiliated off-campus fraternity houses. These properties are not in fact university-owned; they are, as Executive Director of Student Life and Dean of Students Joy Pufhal put it, "recognized student group housing off-campus. The houses are included in the university's "Annual Security Report and Annual Fire Safety Report," but Pufhal noted that "the current university policy does not prohibit the possession of weapons in off-campus housing" simply because of "the way it is written." That specifies carrying is not permitted "on-campus." However, a simple search of the USM website turns up results from the Dean of Students page detailing a policy that states "weapons are not permitted on property owned by or under the control of the University of Southern Maine and off-campus activities sponsored by the University of Southern Maine." Apparently not, because "living" is not considered to be a student activity. This lack of clarity in administrative jurisdiction could lead, as we have seen this week, to a situation in which the university will be forced to make some difficult decisions to ensure the safety of its students. The question is should fraternities be included more in university policy? Can we afford to do more to control them? Can we afford not to?

We saw how situations can easily escalate, not just on our own campus, but in campuses across the country and at Purdue University in Indiana just last week. What can we do as a community to ensure safety? It's clear that emergency procedures are essential, like some of the methods we saw USM officials use this week in Gorham. However, a larger question needs to be confronted at USM; what can USM do to better ensure the safety of its students in the so-called recognized "off-campus" (but affiliated) residencies? The answer may be that the university should do more to regulate these recognized off-campus living spaces that are designated for students to ensure student safety during security procedures.

the free press

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Letters & Comments:

USM news calls for compassion and support

The student body has been inundated by a series of news and events which have given rise to feelings of shock and, in some cases, utter disappointment. With our university already in a state of uncertainty prior to the events of the past week, I urge my fellow students stay strong and carry on, together.

It is in times like these that we have opportunity to show compassion and a sense of community. With negative news involving one of our students, it is easy to pass judgment, to be vindictive and even disappointed. I ask my peers to do the right thing and to reach out, to be supportive, to care and not to condemn. It is in times like these that we can show that we are reasonable, level-headed individuals.

With regard to the news involving a standoff with police in Gorham, it is easy to rush to judgment, to make assumptions and to play the blame game. The whole should not be judged on the actions of the one. So I ask students to refrain from any rush to judgments or hasty assumptions and to understand that we do not know what led that individual to be in such a state, but that he needs our help and support and that there are resources available for those who are struggling with emotional and mental distress (USM provides free health and counseling services).

It is in times like these that we as a student body, as a university, can show solidarity and strength. We can resolve to make this university a stronger, safer, more diverse and caring community. So let us, as a university, come together and show the surrounding community, our families and our friends that we are the best darn university because we care—about our school, each other and the community.

So I urge my fellow students again to stay strong and carry on—together.

Marpheen Chann
Vice Student Body President

The Pickle Jar

Obama speech fails to inspire

Dylan Lajoie
Staff Writer

President Obama spoke on Jan. 17 to quell the country's fears of domestic spying and internet surveillance brought on by Edward Snowden and his National Security Agency revelations, but in the end, he inspired little faith that he would take power back from the top-heavy, national security state.

His remarks were broad, and his policy suggestions were vague, laden with loopholes, and they included language so vague that it could be twisted to mean anything. To regain the trust of the American people, lost since the Snowden leaks began, Obama will need to make big, bold moves in his final few years as president to curb the reach of the NSA.

According to the Pew Research Center, confidence in Obama is so low on the subject that 73 percent of Americans believe his security reforms will make no difference in the current situation.

Obama even shows he either lacks confidence in himself on the issue or the will to do anything about it. His speech on NSA reforms was relatively low-key compared to those he has given in the past, and the choice to give it on a Friday night, going into the weekend when many tune out of what's going on in the world, shows that perhaps he was hoping fewer people were listening.

Maybe Obama is simply doing just enough to pacify the American people? Giving a speech where he

calls the national security debate an important one, offering up some half-hearted reforms, works often when the public discourse needs to be changed, a tactic that seems almost as Orwellian as the current secret security practices themselves.

Obama doesn't want to change anything about the NSA. He doesn't want to have this debate. If he did, Snowden wouldn't be hiding out in Russia, and the U.S. government wouldn't find it necessary to track him down in order to jail him forever in an attempt to silence him and keep what he knows from making it to American ears.

Something tells me there's more to the situation than just Obama's unwillingness to move on the issue, however. It's been 53 long years since President Eisenhower gave his infamous speech, warning of the dangers of the military industrial complex and the terror of

a national security state. Presidents since haven't taken steps to curb the growth of that state, though. Instead, they have let organizations like the NSA, FBI and CIA run wild, doing whatever they please both abroad and in the United States.

The difference is, Obama was the president of government transparency and accountability. He hasn't brought either to the table yet. Despite strides made in health care reforms and the turnaround of the worst economic conditions in the U.S. in decades, Obama has much to lose if he refuses to tackle concerns about the NSA. Despite his wishes, the American people will remember this, and it will tarnish his presidential legacy.

Dylan Lajoie, aka Pickles, is a senior political science major with a concentration in international relations.



Ellen Spahn / Design Assistant

Corrections:

From the Jan. 20 issue on page one in the story "USM bids spring students welcome" a by-line was omitted. The story was written by staff writer Skyla Gordon.



November 2013: Dog-Pound Inductees

Bethany Towne



Major: Tourism and Hospitality

Volunteer and Hospitality team leader: Husky Harvest

Quote from nominator:

"Bethany served as the volunteer and hospitality team leader for the Hospitality and Tourism class that created the first ever Husky harvest. The event was a tremendous success, largely due to the extra efforts she put into her team."

Sharmarke Hussain Ali



Major: Accounting

Portland Mentoring Alliance Mentor

Quote from nominator:

"Sharmarke has taken upon himself to meet with school personnel, figure out the goals and logistics for a program he initiated, and will be entirely responsible for recruitment and coordination of the program. This initiative and his humble attitude makes him an exemplary leader."

Hana S. Hassan



Major: Political Science/International Studies

Work Study Student at the Multicultural Students Center

Quote from nominator:

"Hana worked tremendously hard this month participating in various fundraising events, for the Muslim Student Association, to make them successful. She also completed the starting of a CARE chapter at USM. Hana displays exemplary leadership qualities, friendliness and is attentive to details."

Jenna Rossnagel



Major: Tourism and Hospitality

Marketing and Promotions team leader: Husky Harvest

Quote from nominator:

"Jenna served as the volunteer and hospitality team leader for the Hospitality and Tourism class that created the first ever Husky harvest. The event was a tremendous success, largely due to the extra efforts she put into her team."

Trevor Kendall



Major: Tourism and Hospitality

Logistics Team Leader: Husky Harvest

Quote from nominator:

"Trevor served as the logistics team leader for the Hospitality and Tourism class that created the first ever Husky Harvest. The event was a tremendous success, largely due to the extra efforts he put into his team."

Liz Bilodeau



Major: Social Work

Work Study Student at Portland Wellness Center

Quote from nominator:

"Liz has shown great initiative and a deep commitment to her social work training in her role as a student supervisor of the Portland Well. She is quick to notice when a peer is struggling, and does not hesitate to connect students with resources."

Paul Schaubert



Major: Tourism and Hospitality Management

Finance team leader: Husky Harvest

Quote from nominator:

"Paul served as the finance team leader for the Hospitality and Tourism class that created the first ever Husky harvest. The event was a tremendous success, largely due to the extra efforts he put into his team."

Kirsten Sylvain



Major: English

Editor-in-Chief of The Free Press

Quote from nominator:

"Kirsten worked with me (Marpheen Chann, Student Body VP) in organizing and structuring the USM EdTalks forum, adding insight that led to the success of the event. She also threw in the Free Press' support behind the project and aided the event's advertisement."

Marpheen Chann-Berry



Major: Political Science

Student Body Vice-President

Quote from nominator:

"Marpheen provided leadership to organize the first ever USM EdTalks. He went above and beyond the call of duty as VP to help students have a voice with state legislators."

Stephen Rabida-Smith



Gorham Events Board's Events Chair

Quote from nominator:

"Stephen exemplified what it means to be an effective leader - making decisions that were not only necessary but also helped make the events more cohesive and enjoyable for everyone who participated."

Paul Nelson



Major: Political Science

Public Relations - Student Senate

Quote from nominator:

"Paul played a significant role in helping to organize the first ever USM EdTalks. He has gone above and beyond his regular expectations as a student Senator to make the organization more accessible to the USM student body."

December 2013: Dog-Pound Inductees

Casey Mae Nichols



Work Study Student at USM Health and Counseling

Quote from nominator:

"Casey served as a consultant for Learning Initiative activities that took place during the Wellness block. She also assisted with the intake process for our campus flu clinics and was the primary creator/designer of our flu promotion campaign. Casey demonstrates a well-rounded wisdom and leadership skills that makes her a perfect candidate for this recognition."

Bryn Gallagher



Major: Sociology

President of Student Sociology Association (SSA)

Quote from nominator:

"This month, thanks to Bryn's Initiative and follow-through, the SSA is co-sponsoring its second blood-drive this semester with the American Red Cross on USM's Portland Campus. I am proud to know that the leadership of the SSA is in such capable, compassionate hands."

Kyle Robinson



Major: Economics

President of Honors Student Organization

Quote from nominator:

"Kyle shows great leadership and inclusiveness for Honors Students and has helped build the organization and raise money for a spring trip."

Rochelle Soohy



Major: Political Science and International Studies

Vice President International Relations Association (IRA)

Quote from nominator:

"As VP, Rochelle really stands as a pillar for the IRA through her dedication and excitement for the group. This month in particular, she planned a documentary night for the end of finals to bring together more students and allow them to de-stress."

Friday

Maine Red Claws
vs. Delaware 87ers
7:00 p.m.

Sunday

NFL Super Bowl XLVIII
Seattle Seahawks
@ Denver Broncos
6:30 p.m.

Sports

USM athletes bridge community gap

Justicia Barreiros
Sports Editor

The Athletics Department has been engaging with the town of Gorham to improve relations and build community as a whole.

The Second Annual ‘Town of Gorham Night’ took place at the men and women’s basketball games on Tuesday, Jan. 21 at the Warren Hill Gymnasium. Cheered on by the crowd, third and fourth grade students had the opportunity to play short basketball games during both of the halftimes. According to Alan Grady, youth coordinator at Gorham Recreation Department, there were eight boy’s teams and six girl’s teams for a total of approximately 140 kids from recreation programs at Great Falls, Village and Narragansett Elementary Schools.

Grady was pleased with how the event turned out. “This is our second time running it so we’ve adjusted a few rules to make for maximum participation for our kids,” he said. “The kids had a great time meeting and high-fiving the mascot too.”

Town of Gorham Night provided a great opportunity for the kids and parents to check out the facilities and resources that USM has to offer the community.

“This past fall, USM was able to host the Division III NCAA Regional Cross Country Meet for both men and women at our cross country course in Gorham, behind Narragansett School. Over 1,000 runners competed,” said Grady about the mutual sharing of athletic resources.

“Gorham High School athletics and USM athletics have been sharing fields and courts and tracks for many years now and that has afforded both of our populations the opportunity for improved training and game play



Patrick Higgins / Free Press Staff

Third and fourth graders play short games during the women’s basketball halftime at Town of Gorham Night.

that neither of us otherwise could have accomplished,” said Grady.

This event is just one of many community outreach initiatives organized by the Athletics Department. “Annually we put on the community Halloween party and that brings about 500 community kids in,” said Meredith Bickford, assistant director of the Athletics Department. “Prior to that, last year, the student athletes started a pen pal

program with Great Falls Elementary School.”

According to Bickford, many student athletes also participated with the student ambassador program at Great Falls Elementary translating the school’s codes of conduct and bullying programs into daily life lessons. She also mentioned that they were incorporating USM’s CARE initiative

(Courtesy Attitude Respect Everywhere) into Great Fall’s code of conduct.

“And this year, I developed a mentoring program where I had about 16 or 17 student athletes in the fall serve as mentors to children K thru 5 at Great Falls,” said Bickford. The students mentored 25 hours for the semester, about once or twice a week, according to Bickford. “However, I have had a couple of students that have wanted to continue the program this spring,” she said.

The Athletics Department also hosts youth clinics and camps throughout the year. There have also been skating and sledding events in which children from the community can come and skate or sled with the student athletes and the USM mascot “Champ” for free. These community events allow the kids to connect more on a personal level with the student athletes than they did while at a USM youth camp or clinic, according to Bickford. This amount of community outreach serves a way to build relationships be-

tween the kids of the community and USM student athletes.

“In Gorham, we’re really lucky. I don’t feel like a lot of colleges get that experience. Even just being out at GHOP, seeing the kids and their parents. We’re really fortunate to be such well-known people to the community,” said Abby Hasson, junior elementary education major and forward on the women’s basketball team. “With my major it’s a very beneficial experience and great to have those connections.”

“I think that it’s important that both USM and Gorham realize the uniqueness of having a college campus here [in Gorham] and how beneficial it can be to both parties involved,” said Bickford. “The benefit to a child having a mentor at the college level. The way the kids look up to them and admire them—not every kid gets to have that.”

justicia@usmfreepress.org
@USMFreePress

“The way the kids look up to them and admire them—not every kid gets to have that.”

-Meredith Bickford
Assistant Director of Athletics

This Week

Tuesday Jan. 28

Women’s Basketball
UMass Boston
@ USM
5:30 p.m.

Men’s Basketball
UMass Boston
@ USM
7:30 p.m.

Saturday Feb. 1

Wrestling
Plymouth St.
@ USM
11:30 a.m.

Women’s Indoor Track
USM Invitational II
1 p.m.

Wrestling
Worcester Poly. Institute
@ USM
3:30 p.m.

Men’s Indoor Track
Maine State Championship
@USM
6 p.m.

Scoreboard

Tuesday Jan. 21

Women’s Basketball
USM 68
Plymouth St. 31

Men’s Basketball
Plymouth St. 73
USM 69

Friday Jan. 24

Women’s Ice Hockey
Salve Regina 3
USM 1

Men’s Ice Hockey
St. Michael’s 7
USM 1

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USM COMMUNITY PAGE



Sloane Ewell
Staff Writer

Bryn Gallagher does it all—well, practically. She’s a junior sociology major and criminology minor at USM and in fall 2013 Gallagher became the new president of the Sociology Club. “It has been a transitional semester,” Gallagher said. “It’s been hard to figure out what to do, but next semester will have weekly meetings and more events,” Gallagher helped plan two blood drives for the Sociology club in the fall, one on Sept. 11 and the other on Dec. 9. Gallagher hopes to have more events on and off campus for the club to draw in more interest. “I would like to have a couple events in downtown Portland. Maybe have a silent auction or a local musicians night at Local Sprouts,” Gallagher said of her hopes for the spring semester.

Gallagher is also the co-chair for the Day of Service planning committee at USM for the annual event that will take place this spring. Gallagher said that last year there were seven spots around the Portland area that USM students went to, such as going to Back Bay to clean. “I live off campus, and I realized how easy it is to lose involvement with USM because of it. I think the Day of Service is important to do something through USM and to help the



Randy Hazelton / Multimedia Editor

Bryn Gallagher, junior sociology major, wore her USM scarf and pin the first two weeks of school as a “welcome ambassador” to help new students. She is involved in several campus organizations and in a number of off-campus activities.

community,” Gallagher said. Gallagher stated that this year will be the fifth annual Day of Service.

Gallagher remains active outside of USM as well by canvassing for recently elected Pious Ali, who became the first African born Muslim on the Portland school board. Working with Ali had a personal impact on Gallagher. “Before helping with Ali’s campaign, I had never had an interest in education. I’ve never taken any education courses, but after working with Ali I realized my

interest in it,” Gallagher said. Gallagher says that she still doesn’t know exactly what she plans on doing after college, but plans on graduate school at some point and cited UMASS Boston’s new Sociology program and Chicago schools as points of interest.

Gallagher works at USM’s office of internships and career placements which has helped her think of some options for the future, even if it is still indefinite. “I’ve made some great connections with faculty and staff through my job. I get

to see all the options there are available and that has been an awesome resource,” Gallagher said.

Gallagher still has many interests she plans to pursue while she is still at USM such as education, political science and international relations. Gallagher plans on keeping herself busy both in and out of USM to help better the community.

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Campus Events

Monday, January 27

Eight Planets Omni Dome Show
1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Southworth Planetarium

Tuesday, January 28

Social Media for Social Justice
12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.
UNE Maine Writers Collection, 716
Stevens Avenue, Portland ME

Mindfulness Group
4:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Multipurpose Room, Sullivan Recreation
and Fitness Complex, Portland

Spring Study Abroad Fair
5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Brooks Student Center Dining Hall, Gorham

USM @ Home - Portland
8:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.
Bingas Stadium - 77 Free Street, Portland

Wednesday, January 29

LGBTQA Social and Center
Open House in Portland
11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Center for Sexualities and Gender Diversity,
Woodbury Campus Center, Portland

Navigating Higher Education:
Barriers New Mainers Face
5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
7th Floor, Glickman Library, Portland

Thursday, January 30

Trustee Professorship Presentation
by S. Monroe Duboise
9:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.
7th Floor Glickman Library, Portland

The Role of Collaboration Between Faculty
and the Disability Services Center
12:00 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.
423/424 Glickman Library, Portland

Friday, January 31

Peril and Promise in a New Age: Discussion
on the Changing Landscape for Public
Comprehensive Regional Universities
8:30 a.m. - 10:45 a.m.
7th Floor, Glickman Library, Portland

Deal or No Deal
8:00 p.m.
Lower Brooks Student Center. Gorham

Saturday, February 1

Ski/Ride Day Trip to Sunday River
6:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Pick up in Portland and Gorham

Make Your Own Valentine
8:00 p.m.
Lower Brooks Student Center, Gorham

For more events:
www.usm.maine.edu/events



Featured Photo:



Randy Hazelton / Multimedia Editor

Michael Wingfield led an event in the Woodbury Campus Center Thursday in celebration of the life of Nelson Mandela. Wingfield has been playing African music for more than 25 years. Here he holds the West African instrument made of a hollowed-out gourd called a shekere.