The mission of the University of Maine Humanities Initiative (http://umaine.edu/umhi/) is to strengthen the humanities at the University; encourage interdisciplinary collaboration; promote the relevance of humanities scholarship to teaching, research, and public policy; and build partnerships with other institutions in Maine and the region. The University of Maine Humanities Initiative promotes the cultivation of cultural knowledge and creativity, intellectual curiosity, and critical reflection, and provides an intellectual locus for discussions between researchers, students, and members of the Maine community. The Initiative supports opportunities for humanities research, publication, programming, and K-12 student and teacher engagement. The University of Maine Humanities Initiative is supported by a PRE-VUE Grant, awarded by UMaine President Paul Ferguson, and funding from the UMaine College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

Since being awarded a PRE-VUE Grant in spring 2012, the University of Maine Humanities Initiative (UMHI) has appointed a new director, made two important hires, continued to support humanities events on campus, introduced several programs, and developed a fundraising plan. The UMHI continues to work towards its goal of becoming an endowed Humanities Center that will be a permanent leader in humanities research, programming, and public outreach in the State of Maine and beyond.

Accomplishments Since June 30, 2012

1. President Ferguson’s PRE-VUE Grant allowed the UMHI to make two hires over the summer. First, we hired Dr. Christopher Ohge as Postdoctoral Fellow in Digital Humanities. Dr. Ohge received a Ph.D. in Editorial Studies from Boston University in 2012. Second, we hired Amy Cross as Graduate Assistant. Ms. Cross is an iPh.D. student at UMaine studying the applications of technology to higher education.

2. The UMHI has made some changes to its Advisory Board. For a current list of Board members, please visit the website (http://umaine.edu/umhi/advisory-board/).

3. University of Maine Humanities Initiative Orientation Event
On November 1, 2012, the UMHI hosted an orientation event at the University Club in Fogler Library for all CLAS faculty. It served as a platform to unveil our Sponsorship Grants program and faculty development seminar.
4. **University of Maine Humanities Initiative Sponsorship Grants**  
The UMHI has unveiled a sponsorship grant program that supports humanities events on campus. For more information, please visit the website ([http://umaine.edu/umhi/sponsorship-grants/](http://umaine.edu/umhi/sponsorship-grants)).

5. **University of Maine Humanities Initiative Faculty Development Seminar**  
The UMHI, in partnership with the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Assessment, has organized a weeklong faculty development seminar on the broad theme of the humanities in Maine. The seminar is scheduled for May 13-17, 2013. Our goal is to reinvigorate faculty understanding of each other’s research, to encourage cross-unit collaboration, and to stimulate a more engaged awareness of humanities resources on campus and throughout the state. The chief goal of the seminar is to orient participants to humanities resources—faculty, archives, collections, and museums—on the UMaine campus and in the State of Maine. For more information, please visit the website ([http://umaine.edu/umhi/faculty-development-program/](http://umaine.edu/umhi/faculty-development-program)).

6. **University of Maine Humanities Initiative Executive Fundraising Committee**  
The director has been working with Jeff Hecker, Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and Terri Beyer, Senior Development Officer, to establish an Executive Fundraising Committee charged building an endowment for the UMHI. Dean Hecker and Terri Beyer can provide further details regarding progress on this front.

7. **Public Outreach**  
The UMHI continues to build strategic partnerships with a variety of groups and organizations in Maine. We seek and establish collaborations in the areas of humanities programming, faculty development, K-12 outreach, and funding. Some of these organizations include administrators and faculty from the UMaine College of Education and Human Development, the Maine Humanities Council, the Maine Historical Society, the Farnsworth Art Museum, Northeast Historic Film, the Bangor Public Library, and the Colby College Arts and Humanities Center.

8. **The UMHI & the Blue Sky Plan**  
In late 2012 and early 2013, the UMHI director and Dean Jeff Hecker met with committee members of President Ferguson’s Blue Sky Plan to discuss how our objectives serve the ends of Pathway 1.

**Upcoming Events & Future Plans**

1. **University of Maine Humanities Initiative Spring Symposium**  
The UMHI Postdoctoral Fellow, Dr. Christopher Ohge, has organized a symposium for April 5-6, 2013. The symposium, *Bibliopoetics: The Art and Future of the Book*, will feature clusters of scholars, from UMaine and beyond, in seminars and workshops on topics such as “The Book as Object,” “Editing and Publishing in the Digital Age,” “Digital History and the Future of the Critical Edition,” and “Poets on Books: A Reading and Discussion.” Our hope is to be able to offer a spring symposium each year.

2. **Bangor Public Library Event**  
As a satellite event to the *Bibliopoetics* symposium, the UMHI Graduate Assistant, Amy Cross, is giving a presentation on March 19, 2013, at the Bangor Public Library. She will discuss how teachers and librarians can use virtual libraries to expand their learning objectives and instructional toolkits.
3. **Maine Humanities Summit**
   The UMHI is organizing a *Maine Humanities Summit* to be held at the Governor Hill Mansion in Augusta, Maine, on May 17, 2013. The Summit will convene administrators and faculty from the state’s universities, colleges, and cultural organizations for panels about humanities research, resources, and policies in Maine. We will also extend invitations to state legislators and policymakers. Our goals are to reinvigorate inter- and intra-institutional collaboration, to stimulate awareness of humanities resources throughout the state, and to consider how these objectives intersect with the public. The target audience size for the summit is 100-150 individuals.

4. **Digital Humanities Week**
   Dr. Christopher Ohge is also collaborating with a number of UMaine faculty, staff, and graduate students to plan a Digital Humanities Week for Fall 2013. The events will include a keynote lecture, workshops, seminars, and a K-12 outreach component.

5. **NEH Grant**
   The UMHI director will write an application for a National Endowment for the Humanities Challenge Grant. The director plans to write a draft of the grant application this summer. The UMHI will then seek input from the University community and professional grant writers to finesse the grant. The NEH grant will be submitted in May 2014.

For their support of and hard work on behalf of the Humanities Initiative, the director wishes to thank President Paul Ferguson, Dean Jeff Hecker, Terri Beyer, Jake Ward, and the UMHI Advisory Board.

Sincerely,

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