

Cynthia Gross
Searsport
LD 2231

To Whom It Concerns,

I am physically unable to attend the public hearing, but would like to make a statement to be submitted to the legislative committee that will express my support of the city of Belfast obtaining ownership of the Hutchinson Center for the original purpose of providing a local place for higher education. A place that does not require long distance travel. A place that will not require hours of time traveling to get to class. A place that provides various types of support to students::educational advice, financial advice, assistance for education problems, and a place to study in peace if needed.

I would not have been able to finish my degree if it had not been for the Hutchinson Center providing the guidance and support I received from staff members. I had broken my ankle during my last semester and could not walk on it for several months. I would have had to quit if not for the Hutchison Center and the help of my daughter. She was completing her final year. I graduated six months before she did. She was attending classes, working, raising three children and a husband, all at the same time. I'm proud of her and her accomplishments.

I had been attending classes for years, most of it while raising four children as a single parent. Then as a full time employee, plus working as a substitute teacher. I had attended UMO for several years but that was not possible when I went to work full time. I didn't have the time or the energy to travel that far. Many of the classes I needed were not available late afternoons or evenings at UMO.. After breaking my ankle I started attending live and online classes that the Hutchinson Center. The center provided the computers that allowed me to view those online and live classes. When I had to take tests that had to have a proctor I was able to go to the Hutchinson Center to take those tests.

The Hutchinson Center was a vital resource for completing my University Degree of Mediation/Sociology/law. When I look back to when I was sixteen and I went to my Student Advisor to find out what I needed to do so I could go to college because I had been placed in general level classes that bored me and I wanted a challenge.. I wanted to take college level classes but he refused to let me take college level classes. He told me, and I quote: "Your a girl and you are too stupid to go to college. You just need to get married and have kids." I left his office knowing that I was not stupid and I could do a lot more then just get married and have kids. I was determined to go to college, one way or another.

I did it. I archived my goal: a college education with the help of the Hutchinson Center. My daughter did it. She has a degree in Mathematics. Her daughter has a degree in History. All of us have to thank the Hutchinson Center. Let other people archive their dreams. Keep the Hutchinson Center open to the public for continuing education. You will change so many lives for the better and make Maine a stronger community.

Sincerely,
Cynthia Gross
Waldo county Resident , Searsport
ecipon@yahoo.com