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ALEX ACQUISTO | BDN

Liam Reading, 21, a rising senior at the University of Maine, completed a two-wall outdoor mural this month at the Together Place Peer Run Recovery Center in Bangor.

# New mural depicts Maine icons

## Downtown Bangor artwork completed with help of King Foundation grant

BY ALEX ACQUISTO  
BDN STAFF

The two-wall mural outside a Bangor mental health agency depicting famous Maine residents and funded by a grant from the Stephen and Tabitha King Foundation has been completed.

Artist Liam Reading, 21, completed the murals this

month on the exterior walls of the Together Place Peer Run Recovery Center, at 150 Union St. On the exterior wall facing the Second Street YMCA, Reading painted Louis Sockalexis, who was from the Penobscot Indian Island Reservation and played Major League Baseball in the late 19th century; Joan Benoit Samuelson, the two-time Boston Marathon champion

and Olympic gold medalist who grew up in Cape Elizabeth; and Portland native and Olympic medalist swimmer Ian Crocker.

On the adjacent wall facing Union Street, larger-than-life versions of Brewer native and Civil War General Joshua Chamberlain, Dorothea Dix, Bangorian Stephen King, Old Town native and musician Patty Griffin, and a reproduc-

tion of a Winslow Homer painting.

For the people who stop to look at it, "I hope it'll help to raise their aspirations," said Sean Faircloth, executive editor of Maine Mental Health Connections, which manages the center. By illustrating locals like Dix, a Hampden Civil War nurse who became one of

the most important 19th century civil rights advocates for mental health, it will hopefully remind people that "our organization is devoted to empowerment of people who live with mental health and substance abuse challenges," Faircloth said.

The Kings' \$50,000 donation, awarded earlier this winter, has been used to repave the peer recovery center's parking lot, fund the painting of the mural. Remaining funds will go toward weatherizing the building and stabilizing the center's 19th century porch.

The recovery center helps adults struggling with mental illness or substance use disorder to find support and job opportunities and provides a place to get a free meal and socialize. It's based on a peer-run model which means employees and mentors at the center have personal experience with substance abuse and/or mental illness.