

October 24, 2019



Maine State Chamber to celebrate Maine's Bicentennial at Annual Dinner on October 30 —

Special guest Patrick Dempsey to make remarks; seven Maine governors honored in video presentation; Bangor Region Chamber president to receive award

The Maine State Chamber of Commerce will celebrate the bicentennial of Maine's statehood at its annual meeting and dinner in Augusta on Wednesday, October 30, 2019 with special guest Patrick Dempsey. Maine's seven living governors will be honored and share their perspectives and historical context on what makes Maine special in a unique video presentation at the dinner event. Bangor Region Chamber of Commerce President Deb Neuman will also be honored.

"The Maine State Chamber looks forward to celebrating Maine's Bicentennial and honoring several exemplary leaders who have had a tremendous impact shaping Maine," said Maine State Chamber President Dana Connors. "Our special guests and honorees at this year's dinner continue to impact Maine's progress and success. We are excited to hear their perspectives on what makes Maine special, and to celebrate their contributions and the bright future in store for Maine."

The seven governors interviewed for the video presentation are, in chronological order of their terms as Maine governor, Kenneth Curtis, Joseph Brennan, John "Jock" McKernan, Angus King, John Baldacci, Paul LePage, and incumbent governor Janet Mills. Governor James Longley, who succeeded Governor Curtis, died in 1980.

Patrick Dempsey, a Maine native and television and film actor who founded the Dempsey Center located in Lewiston and South Portland, will be the Chamber's special guest and address dinner attendees.

Deb Neuman, president of the Bangor Region Chamber of Commerce, will be honored with the Maine State Chamber's "Chamber Professional of the Year" award for her leadership, enthusiasm, and dedication to promoting a positive business climate in the Bangor region.

For more information on the Maine State Chamber's annual dinner, please visit www.mainechamber.org/annualmeeting. □



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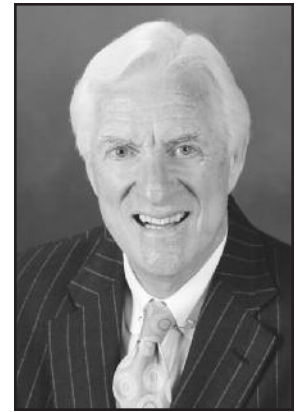
President: Dana F. Connors

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About the Maine State Chamber of Commerce: Since 1889, the Maine State Chamber has been fighting to lower your cost of doing business. Through our Grassroots Action Network and OneVoice program, we work with a network of approximately 5,000 companies statewide who see the value in such a service and provide the financial support that keeps our access, advocacy, and assistance efforts going strong. As Maine's Chamber, we make sure that the business environment of the state continues to thrive. The Maine State Chamber of Commerce advocates on behalf of their interests before the legislature and regulatory agencies and through conferences, seminars, and affiliated programs.

A message from the president...

“Celebrating Maine’s Bicentennial is a ‘once in a lifetime’ opportunity...”



by Dana Connors

By the time you read this, the celebration of Maine’s Bicentennial at our October 30 Annual Dinner will likely be well underway. Its complete coverage will appear in subsequent editions of *Impact*. However, for those of you attending, this year is a unique period of time to celebrate Maine’s rich history, reflect on the journey that got us here, and to acknowledge the leadership that brought us here. It is also a pivotal moment in time, as we look to building a bright future for the next generations.

As part of the celebration, I was fortunate enough to sit down with each of our seven living governors and interview them about their time in office and the role their administrations played in our history. During the course of these interviews, I was reminded of the commitment it took for each to serve in such a public capacity. While their styles, politics, and priorities certainly differed, it is clear that in those 50 years, Maine was fortunate. They were steadfast in their service, up to the challenges, mindful of the economy, and committed to the people of our great state. They each possess the necessary blend of grit, intelligence, wisdom, and compassion. All of these traits are clearly on display in the video. Following our Annual Dinner, the video will be posted on our website. We have offered it to educators to share with their students as well.

Regardless of your politics, I believe we can all appreciate the historical perspective, and from it, foster an understanding for what was done, why it was done, the successes that arose from the challenges, and that relationships prevailed over politics. We feel very privileged to be able to offer this Bicentennial Celebration and bestow our Dirigo Awards upon some of Maine’s most notable leaders. Their collective contributions to our great state span five decades. We are pleased to be able to acknowledge them for the contribution they have had on our state and our citizens, as well as thank them for always remembering the importance of roots no matter how far their wings have taken them. □

Legislative Council releases bills for consideration in second regular session

Earlier this week, the Legislative Council released a list of bill titles that it has accepted for consideration during the 2020 legislative session. From the 88-page list, we have selected those bills that we believe will have impact to employers and to the economy. Our excerpted list appears below:

- ♦ **LR 2628**, *An Act Regarding Utility-related Fees* (Sponsor: Rep. Berry of Bowdoinham);
- ♦ **LR 2656**, *An Act To Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue To Provide New Facilities at the Maine School of Science and Mathematics* (Sponsor: (Sponsor: President Jackson of Aroostook);
- ♦ **LR 2674**, *An Act To Protect Teachers from Certification Changes* (Sponsor: Rep. McCrea of Fort Fairfield);
- ♦ **LR 2684**, *An Act To Provide Veterans with Educational Benefits* (Sponsor: Sen. Woodsome of York);
- ♦ **LR 2714**, *An Act To Ensure Equitable Pricing for Fuel Delivered to Energy Markets*, (Sponsor: President Jackson of Aroostook);
- ♦ **LR 2724**, *An Act To Establish a Process for the Consideration and Implementation of Changes to School Curricula* (Sponsor: Rep. Kornfield of Bangor);
- ♦ **LR 2772**, *An Act Regarding Taxes on Energy Projects* (Sponsor: Sen. Sanborn of Cumberland);
- ♦ **LR 2777**, *An Act To Set a Minimum Wage for School Support Staff* (Sponsor: Rep. Collings of Portland);
- ♦ **LR 2800**, *An Act To Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue To Repair Maine Forest Service Aircraft* (Sponsor: Rep. Dunphy of Old Town);
- ♦ **LR 2803**, *An Act To Provide Student Debt Forgiveness To Support Attraction and Retention of First Responders, Home Health Care Providers and Public School Teachers* (Sponsor: Sen. Libby of Androscoggin);
- ♦ **LR 2816**, *An Act To Protect State Workers from Exposure to Carcinogens* (Sponsor: Rep. Harnett of Gardiner);
- ♦ **LR 2833**, *An Act To Prohibit Certain Wheeling Charges for the Transmission of Electricity*, (Sponsor: President Jackson of Aroostook);
- ♦ **LR 2862**, *An Act To Increase High School Graduation Rates for Students Experiencing Homelessness or in Foster Care* (Sponsor: Rep. Brennan of Portland);
- ♦ **LR 2864**, *An Act To Recognize Occupational Licenses from Other States To Attract New Residents and Business to Maine* (Sponsor: Rep. Andrews of Paris);
- ♦ **LR 2874**, *An Act To Provide Funding for Broadband Internet Infrastructure in Unserved and Underserved Areas* (Sponsor: Sen. Herbig of Waldo);
- ♦ **LR 2875**, *An Act To Provide Funding for Capital Improvements and Equipment for Career and Technical Education Centers and Regions* (Sponsor: Sen. Herbig of Waldo);
- ♦ **LR 2879**, *An Act To Improve Care and Increase Efficiency in the Small Business Health Insurance Marketplace*, (Sponsor: Speaker Gideon of Freeport);
- ♦ **LR 2880**, *An Act To Increase Fairness in Maine's Health Insurance Marketplace*, (Sponsor: Speaker Gideon of Freeport);
- ♦ **LR 2881**, *An Act To Protect Consumers from Surprise Emergency Medical Bills*, (Sponsor: Speaker Gideon of Freeport);
- ♦ **LR 2882**, *Resolve, To Increase Transparency and Lower Health*

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Insurance Costs for Small Businesses in Main, (Sponsor: Speaker Gideon of Freeport);

- ♦ **LR 2884**, *Resolve, Directing the Department of Environmental Protection To Investigate Potential Sources of High-level Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances Contamination of Land and Drinking Water* (Sponsor: Rep. Ingwersen of Arundel);
- ♦ **LR 2886**, *An Act To Clarify the Law Relating to Corporate Income Tax Nexus and the Shipment of Spirits into the State* (Sponsor: Sen. Sanborn of Cumberland);
- ♦ **LR 2890**, *An Act To Establish a Fully State-based Health Care Exchange*, (Sponsor: President Jackson of Aroostook);
- ♦ **LR 2891**, *An Act To Control Health Care Spending* (Sponsor: Sen. Sanborn of Cumberland);
- ♦ **LR 2924**, *An Act To Authorize Separate Alternative Compliance Payment Rates for Maine's*

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Legislative Council... (Continued from Page 3...)

Renewable Portfolio Standard
(Sponsor: Sen. Vitelli of Sagadahoc);

- ♦ **LR 2925**, *An Act To Incentivize the Purchase of Electric Public School Buses* (Sponsor: Sen. Vitelli of Sagadahoc);
- ♦ **LR 2946**, *Resolve, Directing the Department of Education To Amend Its Certification Requirement Rules* (Sponsor: Sen. Claxton of Androscoggin);
- ♦ **LR 2956**, *Resolve, Establishing the Commission To Study Fair, Equitable and Competitive Tax Policy for Maine's Working Families and Small*

Businesses (Sponsor: Rep. Fecteau of Biddeford);

- ♦ **LR 2959**, *An Act To Fund Capital Improvements to Career and Technical Education Centers* (Sponsor: Rep. Fecteau of Biddeford);
- ♦ **LR 2966**, *An Act To Provide Funding to the Maine Quality Centers within the Maine Community College System* (Sponsor: Rep. Wadsworth of Hiram);
- ♦ **LR 2967**, *An Act To Support Maine's Workforce Initiatives within the Maine Community College System* (Sponsor: Rep. Wadsworth of Hiram);
- ♦ **LR 2985**, *Resolve, To Establish Guidelines for the Creation of Offshore Wind Projects That Include*

the Protection of Fisheries and Wildlife and the Creation of High-quality Local Jobs, (Sponsor: President Jackson of Aroostook);

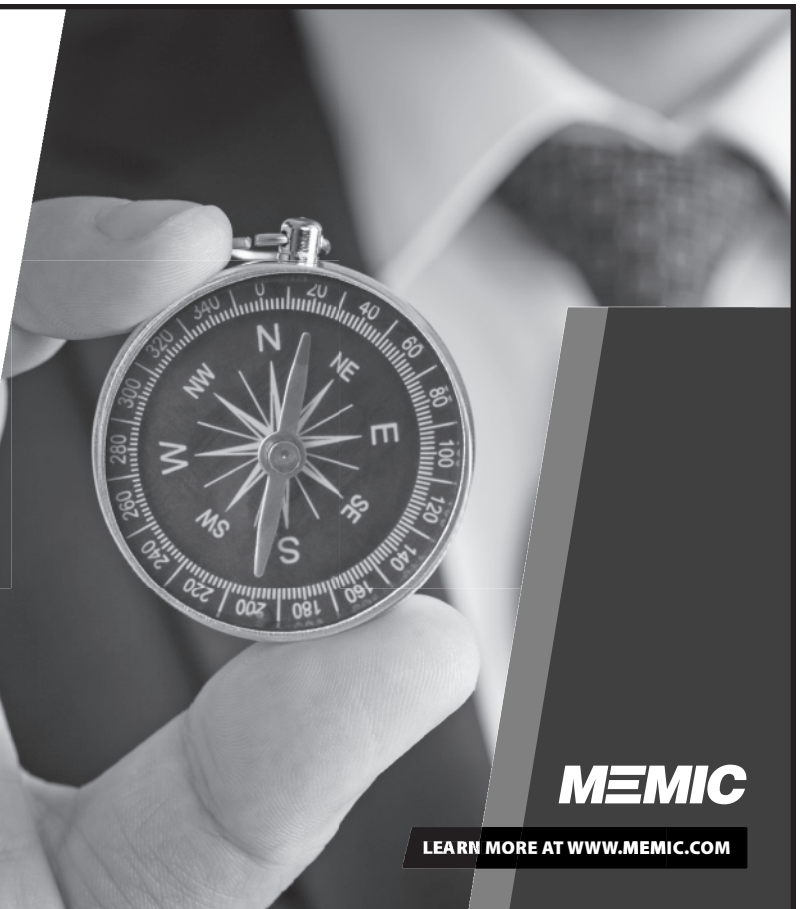
- ♦ **LR 3056**, *An Act Relating to Property Tax Assessments Based on Comparable Sales and Market Segments* (Sponsor: Rep. Tipping of Orono);
- ♦ **LR 3079**, *An Act To Promote Renewable Energy Resources* (Sponsor: Rep. Riley of Jay);
- ♦ **LR 3084**, *An Act To Create Fairness in the Revitalization of Maine's Paper Industry*, (Sponsor: President Jackson of Aroostook); and,
- ♦ **LR 3098**, *An Act Regarding the Transportation of Products in the Forest Products Industry*, (Sponsor: President Jackson of Aroostook).

The Legislative Council is the administrative body for the Legislative Branch of State government. It consists of the 10 elected members of legislative leadership: the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House, the Republican and Democratic Floor Leaders for both the Senate and House of Representatives, and their Assistant Floor Leaders. The Legislative Council convenes, and the Council members elect a Chair and Vice-Chair at the beginning of each legislative biennium; the chairmanship alternates between the Senate and House by tradition every two years.

For more information, please contact the Maine State Chamber's Advocacy department by calling (207) 623-4568. □

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Department of Labor to hold listening sessions on paid time off rulemaking

The Maine Department of Labor (MDOL) is preparing for the required rule-making process for **LD 369**, *An Act Authorizing Earned Employee Leave*, often referred to as the “earned paid time off” bill. The Legislature enacted the bill on May 16, and Governor Janet Mills signed it on May 28 of this year; the law goes into effect on January 1, 2021.

As part of the process, MDOL will hold a series of public listening sessions throughout the state to hear feedback from the public on what questions they would like addressed during the rulemaking process. The Maine Department of Labor has announced six additional locations and times for earned paid leave listening sessions around the state:

- ♦ **Lewiston CareerCenter:** Monday, October 28 at 5:30 p.m. (5 Mollison Way, Lewiston);
- ♦ **Rockland CareerCenter:** Wednesday, November 6 at 5:30 p.m. (91 Camden Street, Suite 201, Rockland);
- ♦ **Springvale CareerCenter:** Thursday, November 14 at 5:30 p.m. (9 Bodwell Court, Springvale);
- ♦ **Greater Portland CareerCenter:** Monday, November 18 at 5:30 p.m. (151 Jetport Boulevard, Portland);
- ♦ **Machias CareerCenter:** Wednesday, November 20 at 9:00 a.m. (53 Prescott Drive, Suite 1, Machias); and,
- ♦ **Bangor CareerCenter:** Wednesday, November 20 at 5:30 p.m. (45 Oak Street, Suite 3, Bangor).

The sessions will run between an hour and an hour and a half.

“We are looking forward to working collaboratively with both employers and workers during the rulemaking process,” Laura Fortman, Commissioner of the Department of Labor, said. “We are committed to a thorough and open process. The effective date of January 1, 2021 provides time for us to work together on this important policy which will allow many Maine workers five days of earned paid leave.”

The legislation guarantees earned time off for employees who work for a business with 11 or more employees. Small businesses with 10 or fewer employees and seasonal employers who regularly operate less than 26 weeks in a calendar year are exempt.

The bill required the Maine Department of Labor to promulgate rules to ensure the legislation can be implemented and enforced appropriately. This process will include posting of the draft rules prior to a public comment period. The Department will ensure that final rules are posted with sufficient time for employers to prepare for changes, if any are needed, in their earned leave policies.

The law requires that an employee earn one hour of paid leave from a single employer for every 40 hours worked, up to 40 hours in one year of employment. This leave can be used for any purpose by the worker; however, they are required to give their employer as reasonable notice as is possible. The rules written will provide guidance to employers, as well as workers who benefit from the earned paid time off. The Maine Department of Labor will also provide new posters to employers outlining guidance for the rule.

If you would like to be updated during the process, please email bls.mdol@maine.gov and ask to be placed on the “Earned Paid Time Off rules mailing list.” The effective date of this law is January 1, 2021. A link to the chaptered law (Public Law 156) may be found at www.mainelegislature.org/legis/bills/getPDF.asp?paper=SP0110&item=4&num=129. The Maine Department of Labor is an equal opportunity provider. Auxiliary aids and services are available to individuals with disabilities upon request. □

Innovative education programs helping address Maine’s workforce development challenges

One of the major concerns of any member of the business community is having a skilled, strong pool of potential employees. Here in Maine, that pool simply isn’t big enough. And, as our population ages, the problem is about to get much worse — unless we act.

A new brief by the business-leader group ReadyNation highlighted that, by 2025, Maine will need an additional 158,000 appropriately skilled and credentialed workers to fill our state’s job openings. In order to fill those openings with qualified employees, 60 percent of Maine adults will need to hold a postsecondary credential of value.

The problem is that our current rate is 46 percent, slightly below the national average of 48 percent.

Just as scary, Maine’s working-age population is shrinking. Maine has the highest median age of any state in the country, at 44.3, a figure 6.5 years older than the nationwide average. An aging population means that job openings are created at a faster rate — faster than we currently have the ability to fill them — thereby growing our “skills gap.”

Thankfully, there’s a path forward.

Being a small business owner for over 35 years (and counting) has taught me a lot. I’ve realized that running a successful restaurant business in today’s world requires additional skills outside of the technical skills of cooking, waiting or bartending.

In order for businesses like mine to have the skilled employees they need, and in order for us to close the skills gap, we have to invest in quality career-technical education (CTE) and postsecondary programs that will do the best possible job of imparting these skills. One such CTE program is Bridge Academy Maine, and I’m proud to be its executive director. Bridge Academy Maine is designed to prepare students for success in careers and/or in

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Innovative Education... *(Continued from Page 5...)*

college after high school graduation.

Bridge Academy students come from all kinds of backgrounds and have all kinds of long-term goals. The program allows them to earn college credit while still in high school, and, just as important, connects their rigorous academic work with real-world experiences that impart deeper learning competencies like collaboration and effective communication — the very skills craved by employers across industries. The partnership between our classroom teachers, CTE instructors and college professors highlights the best of our education system in Maine.

A new study from the U.S. Department of Education backs up the importance of programs like these. The study found that students enrolled in CTE courses in high school had higher median earnings eight years out when compared to their non-CTE peers. CTE participants have higher high school graduation rates, as well as higher postsecondary enrollment rates, compared to peers who do not participate in CTE.

High-quality CTE programs can do so much for students, from helping to prepare them for college, to saving them money by allowing them to begin postsecondary education with significant credits, to giving them the foundational skills they'll need to be successful in the modern workplace.

Maine's career and technical centers like the Bridge Academy Maine program are innovative examples of better matching students' interests and needs with those of Maine workplaces. These programs attract and motivate many students who might not otherwise see their potential for success in a wide variety of careers, including those that are in highest demand.

Investments in high-quality secondary and postsecondary options help ensure that our students are building the skills they need today to lead our businesses tomorrow.

Overcoming Maine's skills gap and ensuring we have the workforce we need in the future begins with greater access and affordability of quality postsecondary credentials. □

Brian Langley, executive director of Bridge Academy Maine, is a former state senator, restaurant owner, a member of the business-leader group ReadyNation, and the chair of the Maine State Chamber of Commerce Education and Workforce Development policy group.

Maine will not give the federal government driver's license information on citizenship and race —

Secretary of State Matthew Dunlap has denied requests from the U.S. Census Bureau to provide driver's license records that include citizenship information and race. The request for the information comes as the Trump administration continues efforts to get citizenship information from states after the Supreme Court in June blocked a citizenship question on the U.S. Census survey.

Maine's Secretary of State's Office indicated that it has received several requests for the information in September, but Secretary of State Dunlap has refused to give the information to the federal government because it would be a violation of privacy. The Secretary of State's Office made its decision after looking at what other states were doing and finding they were also denying the requests.

The U.S. Census Bureau is also requesting information about recipients of government assistance after changing immigration rules to make it harder for people to become citizens if they've accepted federal aid. That rule is being challenged in federal court by several states, including Maine. □



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Education innovation addressing workforce skills gap

by Jason Judd, executive director of Educate Maine

As someone who works with business leaders every day, I know how deeply Maine's looming skills gap weighs on their minds. Regardless of how incredible their products or services are, if they can't find employees with the right skills, training and aptitude for the work they need done, they cannot serve customers. When these goods and services are not available to those of us who want and need them, our communities suffer.

Last year, Educate Maine partnered with the Maine State Chamber of Commerce and the Maine Development Foundation to survey more than 1,000 Maine employers. They told us that amongst their top 10 concerns, No. 2 is availability of professional workers, No. 4 is availability of skilled technical workers, and No. 5 is the availability of entry-level workers.

A shortfall like the one created by this "skills gap" could be devastating. We know that the economy in Maine and around the country will be weakened considerably once our workforce begins to run out of qualified prospective employees.

But there's good news, and innovation is happening across our state to address these challenges. For instance, the Bridge Academy Maine program provides a shining example of how education facilities create opportunity and mitigate these gaps — in this case, by "bridging" the divide between school and career.

Recently, I had the opportunity to visit the Bridge Academy Maine program at the Lewiston Regional Technical Center, talk to the students there, and introduce them to about 25 local and statewide business leaders. Students were able to ask employers questions about their future and also network with people who can help them find their first, or next, jobs.

Bridge Academy is a cutting-edge career and technical education (CTE) program that provides high school students with an early college experience

and the skills needed to graduate workforce-ready. Students in this program acquire both the hard and soft skills needed to thrive in the workforce.

Bridge Academy students attend their regional CTE school, where they participate in technical education in a field of their choice, which, in many cases, have college credits available. Students may take courses that offer them both college credits and real-world credentials, reducing the time and debt that they will accrue by enrolling in post-secondary education. They also continue their academic classes at their high school.

Through their time in Bridge Academy, students gain technical skills through their hands-on training, but they also learn many of the "executive-functioning" skills in highest demand by our employers: skills like effective communication, critical thinking, problem-solving, collaboration and adopting an academic mindset.

Bridge Academy is a great example of bringing together the best in our education system in Maine. It is a true collaboration among our high schools, our CTE centers, and our university and community college systems.

As part of the program, students have more access to support services. Guidance counselors, teachers, professors, CTE instructors, and parents are all there to help students succeed. Through this specialized training and real-life experience, the Bridge Academy eases students' transition to campus life and to solid careers. Students no longer have to choose between technical skills training and pre-college academic rigor. They can do either or both in this blended program.

The Bridge Academy students I met are engaged in and excited about their learning, and hopeful about their futures. Teachers said they are often the leaders in their classrooms. A parent told me about how the program helped her daughter

Thomas College readies Maine's next generation of teachers for the modern classroom —

Thomas College recently dedicated their School of Education to philanthropists Peter and Paula Lunder, reaffirming its mission to train Maine's next generation of teachers. The college has designed modern classrooms and brought in the newest technology, like 3-D printers and virtual reality headsets, to create an aesthetic place that was also a public space. This multi-use space is intentionally reflective of the classrooms of today.

With Maine's teacher shortage increasing, Thomas is expanding their efforts to train future Maine teachers. They recently announced a new intensive three-year program for students to be able to get out into the workforce faster. □

hone her study habits and time management skills. I also met one Bridge Academy graduate who entered her freshman year with 26 accepted college credits — and with two additional summer classes, she will be able to graduate in three years, thus saving her both time and a year's worth of college expenses.

All of this is good news. Maine employers are counting on our education institutions to work together to address their skills gap needs and innovative programs like Bridge Academy Maine help ensure that members of our future workforce are achieving credentials of quality so that these students are adequately prepared for family-sustaining, in-demand careers. That's a key part of achieving or exceeding MaineSpark's goal that 60 percent of Maine adults have a credential of value by 2025.

The success of Maine's economy relies on the skills and experiences we instill in students today. It is imperative that we secure the strength of our future workforce through high-quality, intentional skills training and education today. □

Developing Maine's workforce critical —————

The guest column by Educate Maine's Jason Judd (LSJ Oct. 13; reprinted on page 7) was spot-on: to grow Maine's current and future workforce, the public and private sectors must commit to making sure all Maine people have the educational training, credentials and experience needed to succeed in Maine's 21st century economy.

For the past 11 years, I've been fortunate to lead an architectural, engineering and planning firm with offices in Auburn, Portland, Portsmouth and Boston, and have been involved in hiring workers at all levels within our company. Those experiences have made me acutely aware of our skills gap challenge, and I stand ready to support initiatives to address it.

It's heartening to see that so many of Maine's education leaders and employers are coming together under the MaineSpark initiative, committed to achieving a common goal: that 60 percent of Maine adults have a credential of value by 2025. That will mean brighter futures for employees and their families, as well as for the companies and communities in which they work. This is important not just for today's employers, but also for those currently considering locating their businesses in Maine, especially in emerging industries like aquaculture, food production and biopharma/research science.

Everywhere I travel, I hear that developing Maine's workforce is critical. As the state with the oldest population, we need every young person to reach his or her fullest potential and build a career right here in Maine.

I am pleased that MaineSpark's many partners are helping to better link workplace opportunities with appropriate education and training. □

Clifton W. Greim, Auburn

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Maine Associated General Contractors commits \$300k for workforce development

The Associated General Contractors (AGC) of Maine's Education Foundation announced that contractors have committed to more than \$300,000 in additional funds for Maine students pursuing construction careers. The total fund balance will exceed \$800,000 as contributions are received.

As the construction industry recovers from the recent great recession, the entire industry remains under pressure to educate new skilled workers.

"This effort was considered before the recession but placed on hold," said AGC Maine CEO Matthew Marks. "I don't think anybody expected Maine would lose more than a quarter of the construction workforce. Increasing our capacity to support Maine students attending a post-secondary institution is part of our plan to meet the demand of increased costs for students."

AGC Maine designated a committee to lead the fundraising efforts and set up a Gala Event at the Freeport Hilton Garden Inn to celebrate past scholarship winners and continue fundraising efforts. Chair of the Committee is AGC Maine's 2007 Board President Eldon Morrison, the founder of CPM Constructors: "The construction industry by nature will always be fierce business competitors," he said. "But we know working together to build a stronger generation of skilled workers is in the best interest for all of us and the people of Maine. The cost of education is rising, and we need to support Maine people who will fill the work boots of those retiring."

Maine's construction employment has slowly started to recover, but the need will continue to grow. At peak construction, before the recession, more than 32,000 construction workers applied their skills in the industry. Nearly 10,000 construction workers, that's more than 26 percent, lost their jobs during the recent great recession. Today, around 50 percent of those jobs lost have been replaced. The number of aging workers will only continue to grow.

"The fact is we lost so many talented workers who could have helped the industry bring new workers up to speed," said Marks. "So now we not only have the population challenge in Maine, the exposure to programs like industrial arts has all but disappeared for general education. We can overcome all of these new challenges if everyone works together."

This year, the foundation provided \$21,000 in scholarships for 16 students attending Maine institutions with a construction career focus. AGC Maine will continue to build on existing education and scholarship programs while introducing new ideas this year to increase opportunities for careers in construction. □

Student loan repayment helps attract and retain Maine STEM professionals

Alfond Leaders Program seeking more applicants for student loan debt relief

Funded by the Harold Alfond Foundation, the Maine program aims to stimulate economic growth in key industries by attracting and retaining STEM graduates. The Harold Alfond Foundation and the Finance Authority of Maine (FAME) opened another application cycle to provide student loan debt relief for Maine residents who are employed by a Maine-based business in the STEM-related fields of science, technology, engineering, and math. Applications are now being accepted **through November 15, 2019.**

The Alfond Leaders program assists Maine employers in attracting and retaining talented STEM professionals by providing student loan debt relief of up to \$60,000 per recipient. The grants are awarded through a competitive application process and, to date, 117 applicants have been selected to become Alfond Leaders. Cumulatively, awards now total just under \$3.7 million and the average award is \$31,400.

Shane Kelly, a transportation engineer at Sebago Technics in South Portland, was named an Alfond Leader in 2018. Kelley grew up in Westbrook and went away for college at Clemson University in South Carolina. He returned to Maine to live and work for the high quality of life here.

Kelly recently shared his story about applying for and receiving the Alfond Leader award in a Facebook Live interview in Fall 2018. "When I learned about the program details, it was another huge plus to living and working in Maine. Being selected for the award helped to improve my outlook by reducing the burden of my student loans. I'm married now and looking forward to raising my family

Continued on Page 11...

ROI

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

MAINE
STATE
CHAMBER
of
COMMERCE

BY THE NUMBERS:

- ◆ Our **5** registered advocates possess a total of **125** years of experience in the legislative and governmental policy arena.
- ◆ In addition to their **365** registered lobbying hours this session, our top-notch advocates meet regularly with **administrators and state agencies**, serve on dozens of **boards and commissions**, and present at statewide and national **workshops and conferences**.
- ◆ We tracked **400+** bills during the first regular session of the 129th Maine Legislature on **many diverse policy areas**.
- ◆ Providing timely, accurate and concise public policy updates on a weekly and daily basis to all **65** local / regional chambers of commerce to keep them informed and engaged.

GET MORE FROM YOUR INVESTMENT!

- ◆ Sponsor or attend one of our **dozens of programs and events** throughout the state to network with Maine employers.
- ◆ Participate in our **4 public policy committees**: Environment and Energy; Human Resources; Taxation; and, Workforce and Education.
- ◆ **Connect with us** on Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, and LinkedIn.
- ◆ **Advertise in our newsletter** to reach our Maine members.

THIS SESSION'S HIGHLIGHTS:



TAXES & BETR: Working to keep taxes competitive for Maine employers and their employees, the Maine State Chamber **helped preserve the Business Equipment Tax Reimbursement** program in the budget, and worked to prevent tax increases.



WORKERS' COMP: Facing more than **25 different workers' compensation bills** this session, which collectively would have rolled back or eliminated Maine's workers compensation reforms of 27 years ago and collectively would have added tens of millions of dollars to our members' bottom line, the **Maine State Chamber helped negotiate a much less expensive and manageable alternative for Maine employers, keeping the bedrock reforms of 1992 in place and saving millions in high comp costs.**



BROADBAND/WIRELESS: The legislature passed **small cell legislation** that creates a model municipal ordinance that will help next generation cellular investment in Maine. **This will generate millions in direct investment in Maine and help economic development through the expansion of 5G wireless technology here.**



EDUCATION: Workforce development policies, programs and initiatives kept Maine's workforce needs at the forefront this session. The Maine State Chamber was actively involved in the success of two bills that combine **support for post-secondary education and workforce development for low income parents**, mitigating the "benefits cliff" families face when transitioning into the workforce.



WORKFORCE: The Maine State Chamber was actively involved in legislation to establish the **Foreign Credentialing and Skills Recognition Loan Program**, which provides access to interest-free loans for qualified, foreign-educated or foreign-trained, immigrants who need assistance while awaiting federal employment authorization. This will **improve their work-readiness** once they receive their work permits.

**Return on Investment for your 2019 Membership:
MILLIONS OF DOLLARS**

TOGETHER, WE ARE THE VOICE OF MAINE BUSINESS!
Your continued membership investment adds your voice to our growing network of thousands of Maine employers!

Membership Matters!

WHY MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Someone has to speak up for Maine businesses. That's where we come in. The Maine State Chamber of Commerce is here, because you have a business to run, product to produce, service to provide, people to employ, and a community to support. You cannot do all those things and make sure the legislature in Augusta is acting in your best interests. We're here to influence the outcomes in the legislature, as well provide you with information, programs, and events that are a real return on investment of your membership dues. We are taking care of business in Augusta, so that you can take care of yours.



ADVOCACY

The Maine State Chamber has the largest and most respected advocacy presence of any business association in Maine. No other association covers as many issues with broad public policy implications as the Chamber. From workers' compensation, to workplace issues, health care, energy, tax policy, education, workforce development and environmental policy, our team of advocates is the largest in the statehouse. With a combined experience totaling nearly, we are without question "The Voice of Maine Business" in the halls of Augusta.

ACCESS

Through our various networking events, our membership of more than 5,000 business owners and employees share best practices and create solid business contacts each year. A Chamber of Commerce membership provides you instant access to these area businesses and organizations. Our policy-oriented events give members the opportunity to interact with issue experts, opinion leaders, and policy makers in a meaningful way. Through these events, our members not only learn more about issues, they add value to the dialogue by sharing their own perspectives.

AWARENESS

Whether it's the Impact newsletter, the Chamber Minute and "Legislative Week Ahead" video updates, the news coverage archive, "The Bottom Line" podcast, or any the other Chamber Newsroom resources, the Maine State Chamber of Commerce makes it easy for members to stay current on what's going on in Maine's business community.

It goes without saying that there is strength in numbers and the higher the number, the louder and stronger "The Voice of Maine Business" is. If you are aware of someone or some organization that would benefit from a membership with the Maine State Chamber of Commerce, please put them in contact with Mark Ellis at (207) 623-4568 or at mellis@mainechamber.org. □

FAME / Alfond Leaders... (Continued from Page 9...)

here. I'm glad I came back; Maine has a lot to offer and I don't plan on leaving, so the commitment to live here and work here was easy to make. This program is a real welcome home to Maine for STEM professionals."

Applicants will be recruited from across the nation and internationally, and current Maine residents are eligible and encouraged to apply.

An Alfond Leaders Advisory Committee assists in the selection of applicants and recommends candidates. Applicants can apply by visiting AlfondLeaders.org.

Who is Eligible?

- ♦ Maine residents or persons who will become Maine residents upon being hired by a Maine-based employer;
- ♦ A person employed, or who will be employed, by a Maine-based employer in a designated STEM occupation;
- ♦ An applicant must have a higher education degree or certificate;
- ♦ An applicant must have outstanding student loan debt;
- ♦ Candidates must submit an application, including a written essay and resume, a statement of intent to live and work in Maine for six years; an employment certification by a Maine-based employer; and disclosure of the amount, source, and terms of the student loan indebtedness.
- ♦ Those selected to become Alfond Leaders will receive debt reduction payments made on their behalf, paid in two disbursements after three and six years respectively, of qualifying employment.

To learn more about the program or to apply, please visit AlfondLeaders.org. FAME is a proud member of the MaineSpark coalition. This initiative is a great example of a program that directly helps Maine achieve the MaineSpark goal: By 2025, 60% of Mainers will hold education and workforce credentials that position Maine and its families for success. □

CASELLA, YOUR MAINE RESOURCE



We offer sustainable programs to our customers that not only provide sound economic and environmental return but also build jobs and careers. We view waste as a valuable resource as well as an opportunity for positive change.

Learn how we're giving resources new life at casella.com and [fb.com/ZeroSort](https://www.facebook.com/ZeroSort) or call us at **800-CASELLA**.



The end of multiple choice recycling! Just toss all your recyclables into one bin, we take care of the rest. It's simple, convenient and effective.



Casella Organics® transforms traditional organic waste streams, including short paper fiber, ash, wood wastes, food wastes and biosolids into compost and other renewable products.



Waste collection, responsible disposal, e-waste recycling and LEED certification services for material diversion and reporting.

CASELLA RESOURCE SOLUTIONS

ZERO-SORT® RECYCLING · COLLECTION · ORGANICS · ENERGY · LANDFILLS

Partnerships that pay off — for Maine people, businesses, and the state's economy

by Dan Belyea, executive director of workforce training at the Maine Community College System

For years the business community and the citizens of Maine have been generous in supporting Maine's community colleges. I want to let you know how important that support is, and how it has paid off for students, the business community and the state's economy.

I oversee the workforce training programs at Maine's community colleges, specifically the short-term training you hear about like the welding program at Bath Iron Works, or the logger training program up in Stratton.

What you may not realize is that these short-term programs are running at dozens of Maine businesses in a wide range of industries - manufacturing and the trades, yes ... but also, information technology, health care, hospitality, management training, and software development.

Today, I want to thank the business community for partnering with us, joining us on this evolving and dynamic path to do everything we can to close the skills gap in Maine and boost the financial well-being of our students and employers across the state.



We're grateful for the support so far, and we'll need it going forward to continue our work. Why? Because the short-term training programs are working, and there continues to be extremely high demand for skilled workers in jobs across the state. In existing programs, we are turning away trainees due to capacity. Training requests from businesses are outpacing our ability to respond.

You know this - you hear the same stories I do when I go out and talk to employers. There are plenty of openings for good-paying jobs, but a critical shortage of qualified workers. Employers don't necessarily have the time, money or resources to train workers themselves. Would-be employees are unsure about where to turn for the right training.

That's where the short-term training programs at Maine's community colleges can fill the gap. Our Maine Quality Centers (MQC) program offers a statewide platform for providing this important workforce training and generous grants that make it possible for businesses of all sizes to upgrade the skills of their workers.

If you aren't familiar with Maine Quality Centers, here's how it works. We work one-on-one with each employer, who is paired up with a workforce development specialist at a nearby community college. Together they put together a training program so trainees - whether new hires or incumbent workers - get the skills they need to step into waiting jobs.

For some employers, that means grants to prepare trainees to get industry recognized certifications for, say, welding or medical assisting or computer technology. When possible, there's academic credit available, so trainees can work

Continued on Page 14...

Community Colleges... (Continued from Page 13...)

toward an academic degree. Everyone wants to pursue meaningful work, and we help people find their passion – often in a high-demand, high-wage job. In addition, employers who partner with us on pre-hire training only risk the time it takes to interview those who complete the training.

MQC also administers the Maine Community College System's Put ME to Work program, which provides businesses and industry associations with half the start-up costs to create training programs for high-wage jobs. Participating employers must agree to hire successful program graduates and pay them at least \$2.50 above minimum wage, or at or above the median wage for that occupation.

Our programs are working. They're thriving. They're producing results. The number of trained workers last year was almost 80 percent higher than the year before. And we're on track to provide training to many more hard-working

Mainers this year.

As I write this, there are 30-plus cohorts of manufacturing technicians being trained in Brunswick, information technology specialists being trained in Auburn, and commercial truck drivers being trained in Presque Isle, Bangor and Calais. Next month, training in aspects of marine design begins in Brunswick. In January, training starts for outboard motor repair technicians in South Portland and for natural gas and propane technicians in Bangor.

The list goes on and on.

We also can bring training directly to the workplace, like a program we have at Paradigm Windows where we provide training on window assembly, hardware installation, technical math and measurements, the safe use of hand tools, and lean manufacturing principles. And industry groups or associations can band together to create programs that will benefit all the member employers.

Maybe your workplace is next.

Since Maine Quality Centers was created in 1994 by the Maine State Legislature, the program has served 275

new or expanding Maine businesses and 18,923 Maine people have been trained. This is affordable, high-speed, high-skill training, and it's delivered with the kind of innovation and flexibility that's unique to the state's community colleges.

We are doing all we can to respond to Maine employers' pressing need for skilled workers, but our resources are stretched thin as demand continues to grow.

Maine's community colleges have proven time and again that a dollar invested in them will be paid back to the state many times, with more Mainers employed, job vacancies filled and a higher-educated workforce.

Years ago, it was the business community's support that led to the creation of these programs. Your support now and in the future will allow us to continue and grow this vital program. Thank you.

Learn more about short-term job training opportunities at Maine's community colleges at www.mccs.me.edu/short-term-training, or contact Dan Belyea directly at dbelyea@mccs.me.edu. □

The Department of Economic & Community Development

is pleased to announce the new
Office of Business Development

Director

Please reach out to her with any questions or concerns you have about how DECD will serve Maine's businesses and communities.

Email: Charlotte.Mace@maine.gov
Phone: 207-624-7448



Charlotte Mace

Manager of Small Business & Entrepreneurial Development

Martha has extensive experience in small business development, as well as with entrepreneurship, startups, innovation, and in the non-profit sector.

Email: Martha.m.Bentley@maine.gov
Phone: 207-624-9844



Martha Bentley

Business Development Specialist

Please contact her regarding events, sponsorship opportunities, and other inquiries.

Email: Gwendolyn.Perry@maine.gov
Phone: 207-624-9847



Gwendolyn Perry

Business Answers Manager

The Office of Business Development's Business Answers program can provide resources and support for businesses of all sizes, as well as those seeking to get their business in operation.

Email: Torrey.J.Gray@maine.gov
Phone: 207-624-9812



Torrey Gray

The Office of Business Development is committed to improving Maine's business climate by working individually with companies to ensure they have access to the resources they need to succeed.

- Workforce Training Assistance
- Access to Financing, Loans, Grants
- Tax Increment Financing
- Pine Tree Development Zones
- Opportunity Zones
- Technology & Research Tax Credits
- Equipment Tax Exemption
- Streamlined Permitting Assistance
- And other assistance

The Office of Business Development is committed to the revitalization of communities that have suffered economic distress in the form of low per capita income and will be very active in rural communities to bring quality employment and more high-paying jobs to said regions.

Stay Connected: MEDECD



“Best Places to Work in Maine” announced top employers in the state at annual awards dinner

This year’s top winners in the “Best Places to Work in Maine” included a perennial leader in employee satisfaction, as well as two companies that have steadily moved up the ranks over the past few years.

For the sixth consecutive year, Belfast-based Edward Jones took top honors among large companies (250 or more U.S. employees). Maine State Credit Union took top honors in the medium employer category (50 to 249 U.S. employees), and Planson International, based in New Gloucester, attained the top spot among smaller businesses (15-49 U.S. employees). Both Maine State Credit Union and Planson International had ranked second in 2018; in 2017, Maine State Credit Union ranked 17th, and Planson International ranked 14th in their respective categories.

A record number of companies participated in “Best Places to Work in Maine” this year, with an all-time high of 100 companies named on the list.

Maine State Council of the Society for Human Resources Management (MESHRM) recognized Maine’s top employers for 2019 at its annual awards and recognition dinner last night at the Augusta Civic Center, with more than 900 people attending.

The “Best Places to Work in Maine” program recognizes companies that have established and consistently fostered outstanding workplace environments. The assessment process, administered by Best Companies Group, evaluated each company’s employee policies and procedures as well as survey responses from the companies’ employees. In August, the Maine Society of Human Resources Management released a list of the 100 companies that made the cut as an overall Best Place to Work. The “Best Places to Work in Maine” ranked as follows:

Large Company Category **(250+ U.S. Employees):**

1. **Edward Jones**, multiple locations;
2. **Consigli Construction Co., Inc.**, Portland;
3. **Bangor Savings Bank**, multiple locations;
4. **Machias Savings Bank**, multiple locations;
5. **Grove Collaborative**, Portland;
6. **Darling’s**, multiple locations;
7. **NFI North, Inc.**, multiple locations;
8. **T-Mobile - Oakland**, Oakland;
9. **Publishers Clearing House**, Portland;
10. **TPx Communications**, South Portland;
11. **Redington Fairview General Hospital**, Skowhegan;

12. **Harvard Pilgrim Health Care**, Portland;
13. **Burns & McDonnell**, Portland;
14. **Summit Natural Gas of Maine**, multiple locations;
15. **Wayfair**, Brunswick and Bangor;
16. **Kennebec Behavioral Health**, multiple locations;
17. **Tyler Technologies**, multiple locations;
18. **Hancock Lumber Company**, multiple locations;
19. **athenahealth**, Belfast;
20. **Hussey Seating Company**, North Berwick;
21. **InterMed P.A.**, multiple locations;
22. **Huber Engineered Woods**, Easton and Old Town; and,
23. **MaineGeneral Health**, multiple locations.

Medium Company Category **(50 to 249 U.S. Employees):**

1. **Maine State Credit Union**, multiple locations;
2. **Patriot Subaru of Saco**, Saco;
3. **Damariscotta Bank & Trust**, multiple locations;
4. **Finance Authority of Maine**, Augusta;
5. **Drummond Woodsum**, Portland;
6. **Infinity Federal Credit Union**, multiple locations;
7. **Wings for Children and Families**, multiple locations;
8. **SymQuest**, Westbrook and Lewiston;
9. **Dechra**, Portland;
10. **Town & Country Federal Credit Union**, multiple locations;
11. **Allagash Brewing Company**, Portland;
12. **Bernstein Shur**, Portland and Augusta;
13. **Good Shepherd Food Bank**, Auburn and Hampden;
14. **Systems Engineering**, Portland;
15. **Evergreen Credit Union**, multiple locations;
16. **Deblois Electric, Inc.**, Lewiston;
17. **Bath Savings Institution**, multiple locations;
18. **cPort Credit Union**, multiple locations;
19. **Downeast Credit Union**, multiple locations;
20. **MMG Insurance**, Presque Isle;
21. **F.A. Peabody Company**, multiple locations;
22. **PeoplesChoice Credit Union**, multiple locations;



From left to right are Barry Martin of the Maine State Council of the Society for Human Resources Management; Seth Cheikin and Bridget Olmstead of Edward Jones (#1 Large Company); and, Dana Connors of the Maine State Chamber.

Continued on Page 17...

It's your moment
to belong to a
Maine credit union.

Own it.

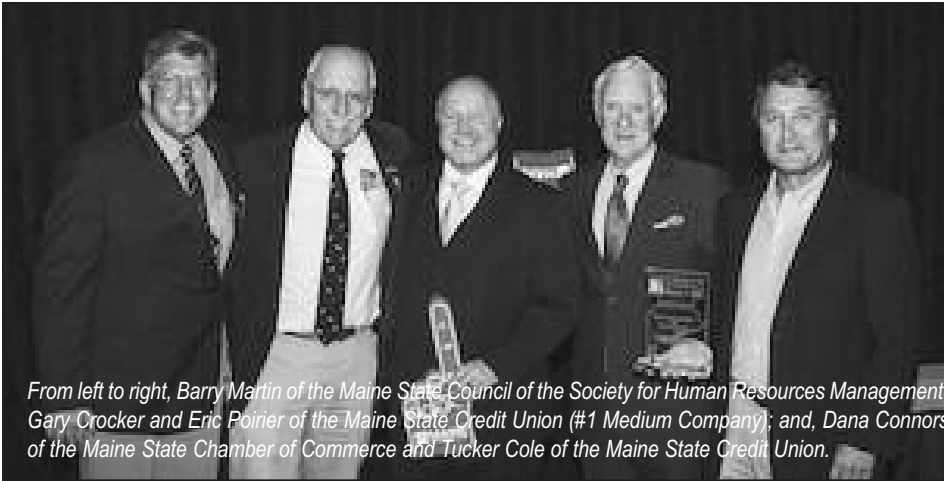


Local Businesses Make A Difference.

A Maine credit union knows what it takes to be a successful local business because they are one. They know what you need to make your job easier, with conveniences like mobile banking, online banking, and remote deposit capture. Maine credit unions also offer low fees, favorable rates, and personal service you can depend on every day.



Find a Maine credit union near you at mainecreditunions.org



From left to right, Barry Martin of the Maine State Council of the Society for Human Resources Management; Gary Crocker and Eric Poirier of the Maine State Credit Union (#1 Medium Company); and, Dana Connors of the Maine State Chamber of Commerce and Tucker Cole of the Maine State Credit Union.



From left to right: Barry Martin of the Maine State Council of the Society for Human Resources Management; Nick Planson and Connie Justice from Planson International (#1 Small Company); and, Dana Connors of the Maine State Chamber.

Photo Credit: KaitLavin Photography

Best Places to Work... (Continued from Page 15...)

23. CES, Inc., multiple locations;
24. Avesta Housing, multiple locations;
25. Sebago Technics, Inc., South Portland;
26. The Nonantum Resort, Kennebunkport;
27. Allen Insurance and Financial, multiple locations;
28. Maine Credit Union League & Synergent, Westbrook and New Gloucester;
29. Community Health Options, Lewiston;
30. SeniorsPlus, multiple locations;
31. Katahdin Trust Company, multiple locations;
32. Gulf of Maine Research Institute, Portland;
33. Knickerbocker Group, Boothbay and Portland;
34. Community Care, multiple locations;
35. Coretelligent, Biddeford;

36. NorthEast Charter & Tour Co., Inc., multiple locations;
37. University Credit Union, multiple locations;
38. Pines Health Services, multiple locations;
39. Midcoast Federal Credit Union, multiple locations;
40. The County Federal Credit Union, multiple locations;
41. Connectivity Point Design & Installation LLC, Auburn and Falmouth;
42. Dielectric, Raymond & Lewiston;
43. GreenPages Technology Solutions, Kittery;
44. National Distributors, Inc., South Portland;
45. Milestone Recovery, Portland and Old Orchard Beach;
46. MAS Medical Staffing, multiple locations;
47. Day's Jewelers, multiple locations; and,
48. Harriman Associates, Auburn and Portland.

Small Company Category (15 to 49 U.S. Employees):

1. Planson International, New Gloucester;
2. SFX America, Portland;
3. Colby Co. Engineering, Portland;
4. Landry/French Construction, Scarborough;
5. Maine Information Network, Augusta;
6. Chase Custom Homes, Westbrook;
7. Main-Land Development Consultants, Inc., Livermore Falls;
8. Spinnaker Trust, Portland;
9. Workgroup Technology Partners, Inc., Westbrook;
10. Fluid Imaging Technologies, Inc., Scarborough;
11. TruChoice Federal Credit Union, multiple locations;
12. Saco Valley Credit Union, Saco and Waterboro;
13. Arkatechture, Portland and York;
14. Oxford Federal Credit Union, Mexico and Norway;
15. Sabattus Regional Credit Union, Sabattus;
16. Octane Marketing, Portland;
17. Trueline, Portland;
18. Portland Webworks, Inc., Portland;
19. MPX, Portland;
20. Albin, Randall & Bennett, Portland;
21. Oxford County Mental Health Services, Rumford and South Paris;
22. RICH EXTERIOR SOLUTIONS, Falmouth;
23. Trademark Federal Credit Union, multiple locations;
24. Page One Web Solutions, Portland;
25. CCB, Inc., Westbrook;
26. Hersey EyeCare, multiple locations;
27. VL Tammaro Oil Co., Baileyville and Calais;
28. Purdy Powers & Company, Portland; and,
29. Kennebec Federal Savings, Waterville.

Endorsing partners of this program include the Maine State Chamber of Commerce, the Department of Economic and Community Development, Maine HR Convention and *Mainebiz*. The 2019 Premier Sponsor is JobsinME.com. Sponsors include KMA Consulting, Amtrak Downeaster, Clark Insurance, Live and Work in Maine, Pro Search Inc., Allagash Brewing Co., the Maine State Chamber, and Human Resources Association of Southern Maine. For more information, please visit BestPlacestoWorkInME.com. □

Check out Chamber BlueOptions!

Don't settle for one health plan...

Get a package of eight with different levels of coverage

Find out more about these unique plans, created exclusively for Maine's state, regional and local chamber members with two to 50 employees.

- ♦ **Coverage when and where your employees need it.**

PPO and PPO health savings account (HSA) plans have out-of-state and worldwide coverage for emergencies, urgent care and routine care through the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association's BlueCard® PPO and Global Core programs.

- ♦ **HMO and HMO with HSA plans** have routine, emergency and nonemergency coverage within the Pathway network, as well as out-of-state and worldwide coverage for emergencies.

Big savings with Anthem's new tiered plans...

With Anthem's Maine HMO Tiered Options, it's a win-win for both you and your employees. These new tiered plans for chamber members can help your company save around 13% compared to the same in-network benefits on a PPO plan. And your employees can save 10-15% on their premiums. It's not just another HMO—it's a better HMO!

For more info on Chamber BlueOptions, please visit <https://www11.anthem.com/mainechamberblueoptions/index.html>. For questions about this program, please contact Peter Gore at the Maine State Chamber by calling (207) 623-4568, ext. 107, or emailing pgore@mainechamber.org; or Mark Ellis at the Maine State Chamber by calling (207) 623-4568, ext. 109, or emailing mellis@mainechamber.org.

Chamber BlueOptions®
Anthem. Health. Join In!™
A program managed by the Maine State Chamber Purchasing Alliance, Inc.

WORKPLACE WELLNESS

HEALTHY EMPLOYEES MAKE CENTS!

Make breast cancer awareness part of workplace wellness

The season of pink is upon us again! October is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, and thousands of businesses and employees will take part in awareness campaigns. Why? Because cancer isn't just a health issue; it's a business issue.

Breast cancer is the most common form of cancer among women, regardless of race or ethnicity. Luckily, there is some good news. Death rates from breast cancer have declined since 1990, thanks to increased awareness, better screening, early detection, ongoing research and evolving treatment options.

If you haven't made an effort to raise awareness about breast cancer among your employees, Breast Cancer Awareness Month is the ideal opportunity to start the dialogue. Here are a few ideas:

- ♦ **Workplace activities:** There are many ways you can promote awareness among your staff. Consider providing information on self-breast exams, dietary strategies and the nearest places to have mammograms. You may also want to sponsor promotional giveaways and events, a Pink T-Shirt Day, a matching donation campaign, or some type of community involvement.
- ♦ **Partner with a national organization:** Organizations such as the

American Cancer Society and Breastcancer.org offer a wide range of programs and corporate partnership possibilities including valuable information, gifts, grants, product and content collaborations, HR support, and more. You could even have one of these organizations participate in an event at your office.

Whatever you do, don't stop communicating when October ends. Why not make cancer awareness a permanent part of your overall workplace wellness initiatives?

You may already promote healthy choices and positive lifestyle changes through workplace wellness initiatives. And since those initiatives are touting the benefits of exercise and nutrition – two vital ingredients in cancer prevention – it makes perfect sense to integrate cancer awareness into those efforts.

More than one-third of all cancers are related to modifiable lifestyle factors that include lack of physical activity, poor dietary practices, and tobacco use. Prevention initiatives such as regular screenings and tobacco cessation programs are proven methods of decreasing the risk of cancer among employees, increasing early diagnosis, and increasing overall cost savings. □

When employees feel good, they tend to perform better. That's why most Chamber BlueOptions' plans come with employee discounts on health products and services, as well as an online come with employee discounts on health products and services, as well as an online health and fitness program. Just contact your Anthem-appointed insurance producer for more information or visit the Chamber's BlueOptions web page (www.mainechamber.org/blueoptions.php) to find a producer. For more information on the Chamber BlueOptions health plan, please contact Mark Ellis by calling (207) 623-4568, ext. 107, or by emailing mellis@mainechamber.org. □

* Excerpted from the Higginbotham blog: https://blog.higginbotham.net/blog_post/make-breast-cancer-awareness-part-of-workplace-wellness

MACCE hosts U.S. Chamber Institute professor, Cathi Hight



MACCE

The Maine Association of
Chamber of Commerce Executives

From October 16 to October 18, local and regional chamber of commerce leaders from around the state gathered for the Maine Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives' fall leadership conference at Sugarloaf Mountain. The Maine Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives provides a forum where chamber executives meet to share ideas, network with peers, and build partnerships with other chambers of commerce across Maine. The group hosts two leadership conferences annually, in the fall and spring.

This year, the group arranged for three workshop sessions with Cathi Hight, president of Hight Performance Group and the developer of *The Member Retention Kit* and *A New Approach to Tiered Membership*. She helps chambers meet the expectations of their members and provides strategies to help chambers manage constant change, deliver benefits that members value, leverage volunteer and staff resources efficiently, and effectively communicate the value of membership. Hight was a national trainer for Association Chamber of Commerce Executives (ACCE) for membership development and has been an instructor for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce's Institute for Organization Management for more than 14 years.

The three workshop sessions covered the following topics:

- ♦ ***It's a Whole New World for Associations*** explored how numerous drivers of change are creating megatrends that will impact your communities and the business of your members. Attendees discussed the significance of recognizing the difference between being proactive and preactive, and why we need to shift our focus to

solving problems before they impact our members. While discovering ways to develop a culture of foresight with boards of directors to help navigate the future, chamber executives also learned five strategies to deploy to be the essential organization our communities can't succeed without.

- ♦ ***Member Personas Drive the Decision to Engage*** discussed how to determine which messages will best resonate with various types of members and explored member personas and the benefits of creating them for our organizations. It is important to identify the information needed to segment membership by common attributes. Leaders also discovered how to use personas to develop targeted messaging, refine programs, and redesign communication strategies.
- ♦ ***Take Back Your Time and Your Life!*** Tackled the multiple "to-do" lists, endless emails, conflicting priorities, and staff shortages that place relentless demands on our time. The result is longer work weeks, less personal time, and increased stress levels. The solution is multitasking, coming in early and staying late, and/or buying Tylenol in bulk. Attendees explored strategies to "work smarter, not harder," and how to recognize work habits that are counter-productive, as well as creating work environments that allow employees to work and live a more balanced life.

The 2020 spring leadership conference will be held at Atlantic Oceanside in Bar Harbor. For more information, please contact Angie Arno by calling (207) 623-4568, ext. 104, or by emailing aarno@mainechamber.org. □

DEP Commissioner Reid to keynote upcoming environmental forum

E2Tech, Maine's largest clean technology business growth network, announces DEP Commissioner Jerry Reid will headline its next forum, entitled "Climate Ain't All That's Changing" to be held on Wed., November 6 in Augusta. E2Tech prides itself on not only presenting current and thought-provoking forums on topics affecting Mainers but also selecting panelists and keynote speakers who are experts in their field.

With a new plastic bag ban, first in the nation laws against the use of polystyrene, and "forever chemical" PFAS in single-use packaging, the sector has been very active. The Maine Legislature also enacted new emissions reductions goals in conjunction with the formation of the Maine Climate Council.

"Panelists will consider the effect on the economy and the environment of the new policies, both positive and negative," said E2Tech executive director Marty Grohman. "Viewpoints from the environmental, municipal, and business community will be offered, and there will be time for audience questions."

In addition to Commissioner Reid, confirmed panelists at press time include Rebecca Graham of the Maine Municipal Association and Pete Didisheim of the Natural Resources Council of Maine. Mr. Didisheim and Ms. Graham were both "in the room when it happened" throughout the development of the legislation and will provide key insight as to what the policies will mean for Mainers in their respective sectors. Attorney Bill Ferdinand of Eaton Peabody will serve as moderator.

The forum will be held at the Governor Hill Mansion in Augusta on Wednesday November 6 from 7:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. and will include time for coffee and networking. To see an updated list of panelists and to register, please visit e2tech.org. □

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