

September 26, 2019

530 new Maine laws took effect on September 19



A wide range of laws that took effect on September 19 – 90 days after Maine’s 129th Legislature adjourned from their First Regular Session. In total, 530 new laws or law changes took effect last week. This number is roughly 25 percent higher than in most previous legislative session. Some of these new or updated laws include banning electronic cigarettes and vaping devices on public school grounds, preventing drivers from holding cell phones or devices, setting new work experience requirements for candidates running for county sheriff, and changing the name of Columbus Day, to name but a few.

The new laws eliminating religious or philosophical exemptions for childhood vaccines, requiring Medicaid to cover abortion services, and the new law that allows for medical aid in dying for those facing terminal illness remained controversial after the Legislature adjourned and were the subject of People’s Veto campaign.

Depending on your perspective, either a new mental health law, or a new gun law, went into effect last Thursday as well. It will allow police to take people into protective custody and require them

to temporarily surrender their firearms if they are found to be a danger to themselves or others with a judge’s order.

Also effective on September 19 is a ban on the practice of conversion therapy. The law makes Maine the 17th state to prohibit counselors, therapists, and other licensed professionals from trying to change the sexual orientation or gender identity of minors.

Laws banning food shaming in public schools, expanding access to free school nutrition programs, and requiring breakfast to be offered to children who arrive late to school will also go into effect.

One new Maine law that won’t become effective until January 1, 2021, requires paid sick time for workers in Maine. The law provides workers with companies that have more than 10 employees an hour of sick time for every 40 hours they work, up to a maximum of 40 hours of time off a year. The paid time could be used for an illness or family emergency.

For more information, please contact Peter Gore by calling (207) 623-4568, ext. 107, or by emailing pgore@mainechamber.org. □

Maine State Chamber launches podcast on issues important to businesses and economy

**Inaugural episode of
“The Bottom Line”
to livestream
Monday, September 30**

The Maine State Chamber of Commerce is launching a twice-monthly podcast called “The Bottom Line,” which builds upon the Maine State Chamber’s previous television program with the same name.

The 30-minute inaugural episode of “The Bottom Line” podcast will livestream at 10:00 a.m. on Monday, September 30 on www.williamsbroadcasting.net. In the first episode, Chamber President Dana Connors and Executive Vice President Peter Gore will introduce listeners to the overall work and priorities of the Maine State Chamber, with a focus on the Chamber’s advocacy efforts. Subsequent episodes will feature a variety of guests and will highlight other priority areas of the Chamber and issues important to Maine’s business community and economy.

“The Bottom Line’ podcast aims to educate listeners about the Maine State Chamber’s activities and leadership on initiatives and issues that impact Maine businesses and the economy,” said Dana Connors. “We are excited to have the live

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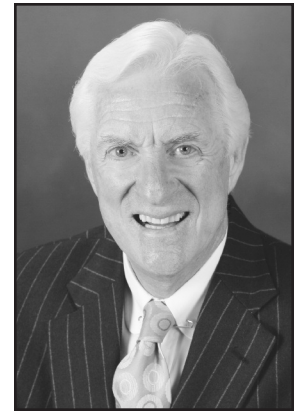
About the Maine State Chamber of Commerce:

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...

“New laws present challenges for employers...”

by Dana Connors



Late last week, 530 laws took effect that will impact Maine employers (see page 1). In preparation for the September 19 enactment date, the Maine State Chamber hosted events in Portland and Bangor to discuss the pending laws and their effect on Maine employers (see page 12). In case you missed those events, we'd like to call your attention to a few key items that became law last week:

- ♦ **Human resources issues** were front-and-center this session, tackling topics such as pay equality, earned employee leave, keeping workers in Maine, clarifying provisions and administration of the MHRA, improving the Workers' Comp Act of 1992, and protecting pregnant workers.
- ♦ **Earned Paid Time Off:** The Maine Department of Labor (MDOL) is preparing for the required rulemaking process for LD 369, An Act Authorizing Earned Employee Leave. 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.
- ♦ **Energy policy:** There are several new laws aimed at transmission/delivery and supply/demand of electricity as well as renewables.
- ♦ **Environmental policy:** The new laws are aimed at product stewardship, food and beverage containers, toxic chemical bans, and solid waste.

As always, the Maine State Chamber is committed to building a vibrant economy that attracts workers and fosters innovation. There is no doubt that many of the 530 new laws will affect employers statewide, most notably in the human resources area. We encourage you to discuss these new laws with your legal and financial counsel and reach out to us if you need more information on specific policy areas. □

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

The Maine Department of Labor (MDOL) is preparing for the required rulemaking 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 first listening session will be on Wednesday, October 2 at 7:30 a.m. at Café Sorpreso on 415 Main Street in Presque Isle.** The session will be part of The Central Aroostook Chamber of Commerce’s monthly “Eggs & Issues” series. To RSVP, please call (207) 764-6561 or email info@CentralaroostookChamber.com.

Future listening sessions are being planned throughout the state, including in Bangor, Biddeford, Lewiston, Machias, Portland, and Rockland. These listening sessions are an opportunity to provide information that the department can consider in drafting rules. A formal public hearing will be held at a later date, once draft rules are published.

“We are looking forward to working collaboratively with both employers and workers during the rulemaking process,” said Laura Fortman, commissioner of the Department of Labor. “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 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 <http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/bills/getPDF.asp?paper=SP0110&item=4&sn=129>. The Maine Department of Labor is an equal opportunity provider. Auxiliary aids and services are available to individuals with disabilities upon request. □

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The Bottom Line... *(Continued from Page 1...)*

and on-demand platform of a professional podcast to regularly share the business perspective and the State Chamber’s efforts on issues ranging from education to workforce development, energy and infrastructure, healthcare and health insurance, labor issues, tax policy, and more.”

“The Bottom Line” will livestream twice a month on www.williamsbroadcasting.net. It will be hosted and produced by broadcast industry veteran John Williams of The Williams Broadcasting Group. The Williams Broadcasting Group produces a variety of daily reports and podcasts from their studio in Norway, Maine. In addition to being live-streamed and archived on www.williamsbroadcasting.net, “The Bottom Line” and other Williams Broadcasting Group podcasts can be heard on iTunes, iHeart Radio, Soundcloud, Stitcher Radio, Spotify and radio.com. □

U.S. Department of Labor releases new overtime threshold —

The U.S. Department of Labor announced on Tuesday, September 24 that the final overtime (OT) regulation was completed and would formally be announced at the end of this week. However, the department provided some basic details about its contents ahead of its announcement. The full regulation will be released this Thursday, September 26, and in the Federal Register on Friday, September 27. In general, it reflects the previously released rulemaking draft:

- ♦ **Salary threshold for administrative, executive, and professional employees** (the “white collar” exemptions) **will now be \$684/week, or \$35,568/year.** This will replace the current threshold, in place since 2004, of \$455/week or \$23,660/year. The final threshold is slightly higher than what was proposed at \$679/week and \$35,308/year.
- ♦ **The Highly Compensated Employee threshold will go from \$100,000** (in place since 2004) **to \$107,432.** The proposed level was \$147,414, and the Chamber criticized this as too high.
- ♦ There are **NO** changes to any of the duties tests as the urged by the business community.
- ♦ There are **NO** automatic updates included, again, as urged by the business community.
- ♦ **Employers may use nondiscretionary bonuses and incentive payments** (including commissions) **that are paid at least annually to satisfy up to 10 percent of the standard salary level, in recognition of evolving pay practices.** Any shortages will have to be made up in the following pay period. It should be noted that during the rulemaking process, representatives of the business community recommended a higher threshold than 10%, and a longer window for an employer to make catch-up payments.
- ♦ **The final regulation will be effective January 1, 2020.** This will give employers slightly more than three months to prepare for these changes, but because the salary threshold adjustment is more modest than what

the Obama administration issued, the amount of employee reclassifications, and other disruptions should hopefully not be overly burdensome.

As some of you will recall, the U. S. Chamber of Commerce brought a lawsuit against the Obama administration to challenge his administration’s OT regulation back in 2015 (salary threshold of over \$47,000). That litigation resulted in that regulation being invalidated by a federal judge in Texas. That ruling was appealed by the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), and the proceedings were suspended pending the outcome of this rulemaking. We will wait to see how the DOJ proceeds with their appeal, but Washington, D.C., observers indicate that the obvious action would be to move for withdrawal of the appeal based on this rulemaking negating the need for an appeal.

For additional information or questions, please contact Peter Gore by calling (207) 623-4568, ext. 107, or by emailing pgore@mainechamber.org. □

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



Martha Bentley

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

Business Development Specialist

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

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



Gwendolyn Perry



Torrey Gray

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

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    

Voters will decide on alternative signatures, transportation bond

The Referendum Election will take place on Tuesday, November 5, with two statewide issues on the ballot. The 2019 Maine Citizens' Guide to the Referendum Election is now available on the Maine Department of the Secretary of States Upcoming Elections webpage (www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/upcoming/pdf/citizensguide19.pdf), allowing voters to see the legislation behind this year's ballot questions, as well as analysis of the intent and content of each question.

The guide, prepared by the Department of the Secretary of State in collaboration with the Office of the Attorney General, Office of the State Treasurer and Office of Fiscal and Program Review, is an unbiased and non-partisan review of the issues that voters will consider at the polls this November. The Citizens Guide provides detailed information about each question on the November ballot. The two ballot questions are:

- ♦ **Question 1:** *Do you favor a \$105,000,000 bond issue to build or improve roads, bridges, railroads, airports, transit and ports and make other transportation investments, to be used to match an estimated \$137,000,000 in federal and other funds?* Transportation Bond: www.mainelegislature.org/legis/bills/bills_129th/chapters/PUBLIC532.asp

This proposal would authorize the State to issue general obligation bonds, in an amount not to exceed \$105 million, to raise funds for transportation projects. The 10-year bond would fund several projects, including upgrades to bridges, secondary roads, state highways and other transportation infrastructure statewide under the helm of the Maine Department of Transportation (\$100 million); a matching grant program for municipal culvert upgrades via the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (\$4 million); and the renovation of the wharf and bulkhead at the Gulf of Maine Research Institute in Portland (\$1 million).

- ♦ **Question 2:** *Do you favor amending the Constitution of Maine to allow persons with disabilities to sign petitions in an alternative manner as authorized by the Legislature?* Constitutional Resolution: www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/upcoming/pdf/ld1437.pdf

This proposal would amend Maines Constitution to allow voters who have physical disabilities that prevent them from signing their own names to use an alternative method of signing a citizens initiative or peoples veto petition. Maine election law already allows voters with disabilities to use an alternative signature on a voter registration application, a change of party enrollment form, candidate nomination petitions, and Maine Clean Election Act forms by using a signature stamp or by authorizing another Maine-registered voter to sign on the voters behalf in the voters presence and at the direction of the voter. Adoption of the proposed Constitutional amendment would expand the scope of this election statute so that voters with certain physical disabilities would also be able to sign citizens initiative petitions and peoples veto petitions.

More information is available on the Maine Department of the Secretary of State Upcoming Elections webpage at www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/upcoming/index.html or by calling (207) 626-8400. □

Secretary of State's Office receives petitions for People's Veto

Secretary of State Matthew Dunlap received petitions for the people's veto of LD 798, on Wednesday, September 18, the deadline to submit petitions for People's Vetoes. Fourteen People's Veto efforts were in circulation as of the Maine Legislature's June 20 adjournment. Of those, this is the *only one* that submitted signed petitions by Wednesday's deadline: **LD 798** (Chaptered Law 154), An Act to Protect Maine Children and Students from Preventable Diseases By Repealing Certain Exemptions from the Laws Governing Immunization Requirements.

The legislation passed earlier this year by the Maine legislature mandates certain vaccinations for children attending public and private schools in Maine. The new law eliminates exceptions for personal or religious reasons, but still allows an exemption for medical reasons.

The group, Mainers for Health and Parental Rights, has submitted roughly 78,000 signatures certified by local registrars to suspend the state's new law until the voters are able to vote on the issue next spring. The Secretary of State's Office has 30 days to certify the petitions and determine if the threshold of registered voters' signatures has been met. Proponents must submit at least 63,067 valid signatures of registered Maine voters. If this People's Veto effort is certified to have the required number of valid signatures, the People's Veto question will go before voters at the next statewide election on Tuesday, March 3, 2020, the presidential preference primary election. The ballot question is will be worded as follows: "Do you want to reject the new law that removes religious and philosophical exemptions to requiring immunization against certain communicable diseases for students to attend schools and colleges and for employees of nursery schools and health care facilities?"

If the People's Veto effort is determined to be invalid, then the law in question will take effect the day following that determination. The Secretary of State's office is now reviewing the validity of the petitions. □

Maine Jump\$**start** Coalition names two high school teachers as 2019-2020 financial educators of the year —

The Maine Jump\$**start** Coalition for Personal Financial Literacy has awarded two Maine educators for their outstanding work in financial education. The Maine Jump\$**start** Financial Educator of the Year Award, established in 2012, was created to recognize an individual who has distinguished themselves through their efforts to improve the financial capability of the students and families they serve. For the first time in the history of the award, The Maine Jump\$**start** Coalition is pleased to honor two accomplished Maine educators. The 2019-2020 honorees, Ms. Raelene Allen of Madison High School and Ms. Samantha Drost of Central Aroostook High School, are leaders in personal finance education in Maine, and epitomize the true spirit of the award.

Raelene Allen has been bringing passion and leadership on the subject of financial literacy since she began teaching at Madison High School twenty years ago. Allen started as a business teacher, and soon expanded to teaching a senior seminar that included personal finance topics such as managing bank accounts, insurance, loans, and budgeting. When the course was eliminated, Allen took the initiative to bring personal finance back to Madison High School by attending the annual Maine Jump\$**start** Coalition conference and gathering the resources and training she needed. In 2009, Personal Finance was added as a course offering. Dean Collins, the Director of School Counseling, writes, "Raelene gave a presentation to the school board on the particulars of our Personal Finance course and the school board recommended that the class become a graduation requirement." Because of Allen's efforts, today it is a required course for all juniors at Madison High School.

Allen has been committed to increasing her own knowledge in personal finance. She became a Certified Educator

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Pre-K expansion key to Maine's future —

EDITOR'S NOTE: The Letter to the editor below was written by Jeremy R. Fischer of Yarmouth and printed in the Portland Press Herald on September 23, 2019. It can be viewed online at pressherald.com/2019/09/23/letter-to-the-editor-pre-k-expansion-key-to-maines-future/.

When it comes to growing a strong Maine workforce, reaching kids at a young age in programs like quality pre-K is key. That's why I was pleased to read that Maine added 280 new pre-K slots statewide this school year, with pre-K programs now offered in approximately three-quarters of Maine school districts. This is a big step in the right direction for employers, Maine's economy and for kids today who are Maine's future workforce.

For a lot of kids, quality early learning programs are instrumental in determining their success in school. The skills kids learn at this young age prepare them to start school strong and can make kids more apt to stay in school, do well, graduate and pursue postsecondary education.

Today, Maine faces flat workforce growth projections and an aging work-

force. Most future jobs will require post-secondary education or another skilled credential. Maine needs to pull out all the stops to prepare people to be ready and able to fill the jobs of tomorrow by laying an early foundation for educational attainment and success. Making pre-K available to all Maine kids is a big part of the solution.

Quality pre-K programs that are accessible to all Maine kids in every school district will better position Maine to compete economically going forward and will better position Mainers to succeed. It is encouraging that pre-K is growing in Maine. Further expansion deserves support from the governor and legislators, and is essential to the success of Maine's economy, employers and people. □



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Investments in Maine's community colleges pay off quickly

Business owners and industry leaders know it takes a sharp-eyed, ongoing assessment of your operation to ensure it's operating at peak efficiency. The same thing holds true for Maine's community colleges. This fall, the community colleges are showcasing one of the things they do best – responding quickly and efficiently to the changing needs of the state.

Take the \$3.6 million workforce development grant received from the Harold Alfond Foundation last December. Moving swiftly, the community college system launched 11 *new* workforce training programs, offered at no cost to students. These programs include medical assisting at Eastern Maine Community College and Southern Maine Community College; welding at Kennebec Valley Community College and SMCC; and a computer support program at Central Maine Community College.

Demand is high for these programs: EMCC received 235 applications for 40 spots in the medical assisting training. And when the 128th Legislature gave the system \$3.4 million in 2017 earmarked for workforce development, those funds were immediately put to use. The result: 10 new or expanded degree and certificate programs in the trades and technologies. Again, the turnaround time was fast and efficient.

The system also continues its long-standing process for ensuring that academic offerings are robust, relevant and responsive to the needs of students and the state's economy – through constant assessment and regular adjustments. In the past four years alone, the colleges have added, changed, or discontinued over 75 program options to better align their offerings with the needs of Maine employers.

"We are proud of our ability to respond quickly to Maine's widespread, critical workforce challenge but we want to do more. That will take additional investment," MCCS President David Daigler said.

"Despite Maine's low unemployment, we are seeing incredible demand for these job-training programs - hundreds of people have been turned away or put on waiting lists because there is more demand than we have capacity," Daigler said. "Additional funding would allow us

to add more classes, train more people for high-demand jobs and expand into new areas to help ease the workforce shortage in other industries."

Another way the colleges ensure they are offering the right programs at the right time is by working closely with business partners to develop affordable and customizable short-term training to fulfill workforce needs. Much of this training is supported by grants to employers from the MCCS Maine Quality Centers.

By working closely with employers, the colleges are able to design and deliver training that's targeted to the specific needs of the workplace. It's fast and efficient. Trainees learn exactly what they need to get a job or advance within the organization, and employers are assured that both new hires and incumbent workers have the training they need to get the job done.

"(The community colleges) are very adaptable to the needs of the workforce, and the needs of the employers in the community," notes Ryan Ellsworth, president and chief executive officer of the County Federal Credit Union. "They are willing to customize the programs that they offer the students based on what's needed, and that's unique in a college."

Maine's community colleges are also nimble when it comes to scheduling since, for some people, two years is too long or they can't attend class on a traditional schedule.

For example, the programs funded by the Harold Alfond grant are all offered during evenings, weekends or during times that are convenient to allow working students the flexibility to participate. At York County Community College, there are seven different semester start times to accommodate students with work and family commitments.

The community colleges have also introduced new education pathways, including stackable certificates that can be used to build towards a degree, and digital badges that allow students to put their education to work quickly.

Community college students are hard-working people who are the current and

Maine JumpStart...

(Continued from Page 6...)

in Personal Finance by completing a certification program through the Center for Financial Certifications, a division of the Institute for Financial Literacy, in Portland Maine, and has served on The Maine JumpStart Coalition Board of Directors since 2017. In 2018, Allen was awarded a scholarship by NextGen Personal Finance for an all-expenses-paid trip to the National JumpStart Conference in Ohio.

One of Allen's talents as a teacher is making the lessons she teaches relevant to her students. She continually revises lesson plans to keep them current and creates activities that will engage students by making broad financial concepts applicable to them, such as comparing and contrasting different insurance plans on cell phones to decide if the benefit is worth it. She utilizes many different resources to support her lessons, such as programs from the National Endowment for Financial Education (NEFE), and integrating technology. Christopher LeBlanc, the principal of Madison High School, writes, "The online work [in Allen's lessons] helped to utilize the technology the students loved to use and integrate personal finance into their lives."

Raelene Allen is committed to continuing to provide excellent financial education to her students, as well as resources to her fellow teachers across Maine. "Raelene has a vested interest not only in our students but also as a professional who has stepped up to become a member of The Maine JumpStart board," says Dean Collins. "We are preparing our students to be able to be financially aware when they graduate and that is really due to the outstanding job that Raelene Allen is doing."

Samantha Drost has been teaching at Central Aroostook High School for eight years, and in that time, she has transformed the school's personal finance curriculum. When she began, she was assigned to teach an economics course, but her class became more focused on personal finance as the lessons included balancing a checkbook, managing a budget, and reducing debt. In her time at Central Aroostook High School, Drost

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Maine Jump\$tart... (Continued from Page 7...)

has been aware of the students' needs and she has taken action to fill any gaps she saw. When she noticed that students needed to have earlier access to college and career planning, she created a sophomore level class that focused on this subject.

Drost's passion for financial literacy extends beyond her school, and she has been a leader in bringing financial education to all schools in Maine. "Samantha has found a new passion for teaching personal finance thanks to the Maine Jump\$tart Program," writes Dr. Kay York, the principal of Central Aroostook High School. Drost serves on The Maine Jump\$tart Coalition Board of Directors, where she serves on the Program Committee. Drost was also awarded a scholarship to attend the 2018 National Jump\$tart Conference, after which she returned to school "prepared and excited to bring new resources to her students including NGPF lessons, web-based games, Financial Fridays and local speakers," says Dr. York.

Drost has continued to further her

education in financial literacy by attending various FinCamps in Maine, completing virtual training with NextGen Personal Finance, and is working on earning her senior-level certification through their program.

Drost also served as a co-facilitator during the revision of the Maine Learning Results for Social Studies, which strengthened the personal finance and economics component in the state standards. In April, Drost will be teaching a webinar on personal finance for the Maine Department of Education's social studies webinar series. To continue to expand her reach to teachers around the state, this fall Drost is applying for and hopes to be accepted as a state teacher leader for personal finance.

"Samantha's passion has grown into expanding her knowledge to others," writes Dr. York. "She will continue to strive to bring more education not only to her students, but the teachers in Northern Maine and the state."

Ms. Allen and Ms. Drost will receive an all-expenses-paid trip to the National Jump\$tart Educator Conference in Washington, D.C. this November, where they will network with financial educators

from across the country and gather resources to use in the classroom. In addition to the award, Ms. Allen and Ms. Drost will each receive a \$500 financial education grant from Machias Savings Bank. They will be formally honored at the 2020 Fostering Financial Education in Maine Schools Conference on May 8th at the Augusta Civic Center. The Maine Jump\$tart Coalition is thrilled to grant this award to such hardworking and dedicated educators as Raelene Allen of Madison High School and Samantha Drost of Central Aroostook High School. □

About Maine Jump\$tart Coalition...

The mission of the Maine Jump\$tart Coalition for Personal Financial Literacy is to improve the financial knowledge of Maine citizens, with a special focus on pre-K through college students, including adult learners. Working collaboratively, the Coalition seeks to increase awareness and provide training and support to Maine educators while also promoting educational resources and fostering communication among agencies and individuals who provide financial education to Maine families. For more information, visit <http://mejumpstart.org/>.

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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.

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- ◆ 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.

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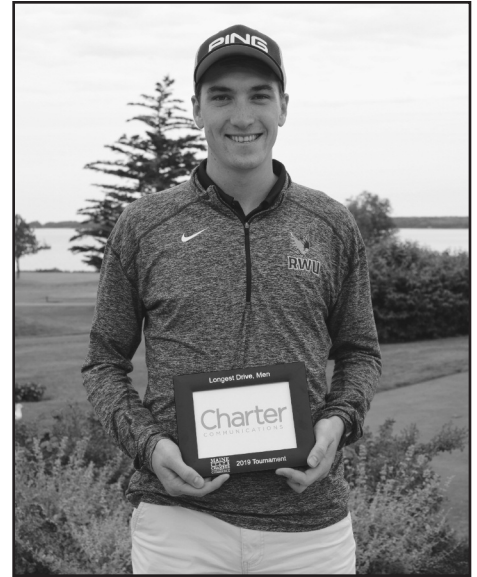
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Congratulations to our Tournament Champions!

1st Place Low Net:

Steve Kroilikowski, Laurie Fisher,
Theresa Stringer, Matt Stringer

2nd Place Low Net:

Jeff McGown, Steve Cates,
Patrick Hopkins, Geoff Hart

1st Place Low Gross:

Tim Hayden, Tim Grasse,
Stephan Wrigley, Lenny Plourde

2nd Place Low Gross:

Pete Connell, Gary LaPierre,
Tim Walton, Jon Courtney

Long Drive Men: Trevor Hoxsie

Long Drive Women: Laurie Fischer

Closest to the Pin: Matt Morrison

***Thank you to all the participants
for helping us to raise
these scholarship funds!***



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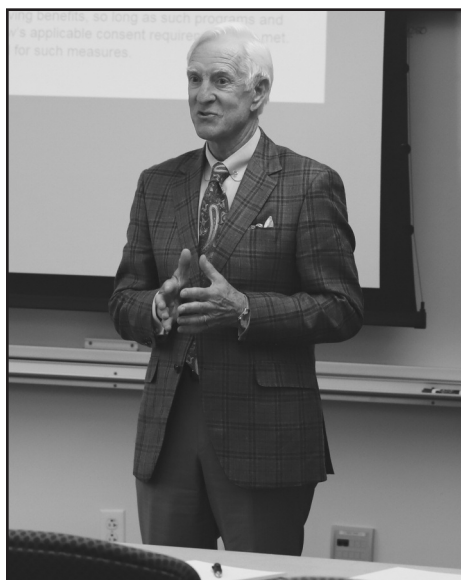
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Chamber forum on enacting legislation helps members prepare for effects of new laws

The 129th Legislature ended their work for this year on June 20, 2019. During the five and a half months they met, legislators considered nearly 2,000 bills covering a vast array of public policy topics. Before they were finished in the early morning hours on June 20, they had enacted roughly 600 new laws.

Many of these new laws went into effect on September 19. In order to inform our members of these changes, the Maine State Chamber hosted a half-day program on enacted legislation and what it means for our member companies. On Tuesday, September 10 in Portland and Wednesday, September 11 in Bangor, nearly 150 members gather to hear from three panelists as they outlined pending laws in the policy areas of the workplace/HR, environment and energy. Our panel of experts covered topics that include changes in workers compensation law, the new "paid time off" law, energy policy, bans on plastic bags and Styrofoam, and a variety of other new laws. □





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Community Colleges... (Continued from Page 7...)

future workforce of the state. We need to provide them with education and training that will open doors to employment opportunities and fuel the Maine economy.

Maine's community colleges provide education and training to over 25,000 people a year. But consider this: Roughly a third of students report working at least 30 hours a week while in school, and three-quarters of those who are enrolled full-time receive financial aid. They are committing to the work of improving their lives and their communities. We will not waste their precious time.

To our partners in the community, we say the same: We know that to be a true resource for our students, the community and the state, Maine's community colleges need to *move at the speed of business*.

There's no time to waste. □

Submitted by Noel K. Gallagher, Director of Communications and Public Affairs at the Maine Community College System.



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WORKPLACE WELLNESS

HEALTHY EMPLOYEES MAKE CENTS!

Surprising Health Benefits of Yoga

EDITOR'S NOTE: In her HuffPost article, Kristen Domonell for Life by DailyBurn notes the health benefits of yoga. We have reprinted it below, and it is accessible online at https://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/02/12/yoga-health-benefits_n_4768746.html.

Yoga increases flexibility and reduces stress, but the practice can do more than help you twist your body into pretzel shapes and find inner peace. These hidden benefits will help you in the kitchen, office, and bedroom — and will give you five new reasons to show off your yoga skills.

- 1. Boost Immunity:** A recent Norwegian study found that yoga practice results in changes in gene expression that boost immunity at a cellular level. And it doesn't take long: The researchers believe the changes occurred while participants were still on the mat, and they were significantly greater than a control group who went on a nature hike while listening to soothing music. Yoga also helps to boost immunity by simply increasing overall health, says Mitchel Bleier, a yoga teacher of 18 years and owner of Yogapata in Connecticut. "As you breathe better, move better and circulate better, all the other organs function better."
- 2. Ease Migraines:** Research shows that migraine sufferers have fewer and less painful migraines after three months of yoga practice. The cause of migraines isn't fully understood, but Bleier says it could be a combination of mental stressors and physical misalignment that create migraines and other issues. Hunching over a computer or cell phone with your shoulders up and head forward causes overlifting of your trapezius and tightening of the neck. This pulls the head forward and creates muscle imbalances that can contribute to headaches and migraines.
- 3. Sleep Better:** Researchers from Harvard found that eight weeks of daily yoga significantly improved sleep quality for people with insomnia. And another study found that twice-weekly yoga sessions helped cancer survivors sleep better and feel less fatigued. This can be attributed to yoga's ability to help people deal with stress, says Bleier. "Sleep issues are like anxiety. Your head can't stop spinning, you don't know how to relax," he says. "Breathing and mental exercises allow the mind to slow down, so you're going to start to see yourself sleep better."
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- 5. Fight Food Cravings:** Researchers from the University of Washington found that regular yoga practice is associated with mindful eating, an awareness of physical and emotional sensations associated with eating. By causing breath awareness, regular yoga practice strengthens the mind-body connection, Bleier says. The awareness can help you tune in to emotions involved with certain cravings, and yoga breathing exercises can help you slow down and make better choices when cravings strike.

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. □

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