

August 2019

Governor Mills' first special session determines fate of pending bond proposals

On Monday, August 19, Governor Janet Mills issued a proclamation calling for a special legislative session to be held at 10:00 a.m. on Monday, August 26 to consider transportation, infrastructure and economic development, environmental protection, and land conservation bonds.

Since adjournment in June, the Governor's Office has been in communication with Democrat and Republican legislators about the bond proposal she had presented. After discussions and several weeks of negotiating, Governor Mills announced that she would be presenting a revised \$163 million bond proposal for consideration by the Legislature. The proposal was submitted, and voted on, in the form of four Governor's bills. The proposal was as follows:

- ♦ **Transportation:** \$105 million to upgrade roads, bridges, ports, rail and air transportation and to repair culverts and restore a commercial fishing wharf. Transportation bonding will draw an estimated \$137 million in matching federal and other additional funds.
- ♦ **Infrastructure and economic development:** \$15 million to expand high-speed internet access in rural Maine, which will draw at least a 3-to-1 match in federal and private funding; \$4 million for capital equipment for career and technical education centers; and, \$4 million to restore and modernize National Guard facilities across the state with an expected 50-50 match.
- ♦ **Environmental protection and**

energy efficiency: \$5 million to improve wastewater infrastructure at the municipal level to prevent and control pollution, drawing down 150% or more in matching funds; \$5 million to support remediation efforts through the Department of Environmental Protection at uncontrolled hazardous sites across the state; \$5 million for the Heating Fuels Efficiency and Weatherization Fund to provide low-interest loans for energy efficiency projects.

- ♦ **Land conservation:** \$20 million for the Land for Maine's Future program to be dispersed over two years to preserve far land, working waterfronts and other natural resources. The program has not been funded in eight years but draws significant matching funds.

The House and Senate went into its First Special Session late in the morning of Monday, August 26. Republicans announced at the start of the session that they would not be supporting anything other than the Transportation bonding during the Special Session and would discuss all other bonds in January 2020 when the Second Regular Session of the 129th Legislature convenes.

The resistance from Republican Leadership before adjournment in June was due to the amount of borrowing proposed. They had wanted the entire package to be divided into separate issues when presented to voters in November.

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Next steps of earned paid time off bill for Maine Department of Labor, effective 2021

The Maine Department of Labor 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, 2019, and Governor Janet Mills signed it on May 28, 2019.

"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

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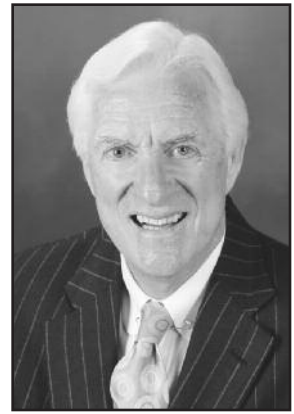
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About the Maine State Chamber of Commerce: Since 1889, the Maine State Chamber has been fighting to lower your cost of doing business. Through our Grassroots Action Network and OneVoice program, we work with a network of approximately 5,000 companies 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...

“Special session only addressed one of Maine’s needed investments...”



by Dana Connors

By now, the outcomes of the special session (see page 1) in August – specifically the fate of the bond issues – is well-known to many of you. From our perspective, all four proposed bonds represented needed investment in our state’s economy, the education of our workforce, and our valued environment.

It appears, at this time, that the debate was centered more on the timing of the bonds than on the value of the questions proposed. There is no question, from our point of view, that investment in transportation contributes to our economy, and we commend the legislature for seeing its value.

Just as roads, bridges, rail, ports and airports move products to market, broadband access and speed plays a crucial role for employers to compete in the global economy. There is no time to lose on this issue, and clearly, government has a role in its development, implementation, and ultimately, in its success.

As you will see in this edition, workforce development is being addressed by a variety of educational institutions, in conjunction with business partners, to meet the ever-changing needs of our workforce. Part of the “missed opportunity” of the special session was \$4 million for capital equipment for career and technical education (CTE) centers. The value of CTE education is key to workforce training and retraining – and key to our economic success.

Whether it appears on ballots now, or next June, we hope the legislature doesn’t lose sight of the importance of these key economic investments as we continue to build a world-class workforce supported by a world-class infrastructure. □

Secretary of State reviewing 17 People's Veto petitions

The Secretary of State's office is reviewing 17 requests for People's Veto petitions that they have received on an array of laws passed by the Legislature this year.

People's Veto Petition Procedures...

Any Maine registered voter may circulate a people's veto referendum by following these steps:

- ♦ The voter must submit a written application to the Secretary of State. The completed application must contain the names, addresses and signatures of five Maine registered voters, in addition to the applicant, who are designated to receive any notices related to the processing of the application. The voter submitting the application must sign it in the presence of the Secretary of State, the Secretary of State's designee or a notary public. The application must contain either the full text of or a reference to the public law to be vetoed.
- ♦ Within 10 business days after receiving the application, the Secretary of State must review the application and either reject it, or accept it, and provide the ballot question to the applicant.
- ♦ After the Secretary of State has provided the ballot question to the applicant, the Division of Elections will provide an approved petition form to be circulated by the petitioners. The proponents must print or duplicate additional petition forms as needed, in the exact format provided by the Secretary of State.

Filing Deadlines...

- ♦ An application for a people's veto referendum petition must be filed with the Secretary of State within 10 business days after adjournment of the legislative session at which the Act in question was passed.

- ♦ The filing deadline for a people's veto referendum petition is by 5 p.m. on the 90th day after adjournment of the legislative session at which the Act was passed.
- ♦ Signatures totaling 10% (63,067) of the votes cast for the last statewide governor's election are required.

Most applications (14 of the 17) have been filed by Jack McCarthy of northern Aroostook County; other applications include groups such as the Christian Civic League of Maine and Mainers for Health and Parental Rights.

Organizers of the People's Vetoes must gather more than 63,000 valid signatures to suspend a law until voters vote on the measure in the November 2019, or the March or June 2020 referendum ballot. To get on the November 5, 2019, ballot, signatures would need to be submitted to the Secretary of State's office sometime in early August to give the Secretary of State 30 days to validate the petitions before the September 6 ballot deadline.

If petition campaigns miss the September 6 deadline, they would be able to get on the 2020 March or June referendum ballot, as long as the signatures are gathered and submitted to municipal clerks for initial review before the laws targeted by the petitions go into effect, which would be September 19, 2019. Petitioners would need to get their signatures to local clerks by September 13, and the clerks would have to verify signatures and send signed petitions to the state by September 18.

The most recent application for a petition targets the assisted-suicide law that will allow a terminally-ill patient to take a lethal dose of medication obtained from a physician. Activists also want to overturn the law that will prohibit the practice of "conversion therapy" on minors to change their sexual orientation. The other laws subject to people's veto campaigns run the gamut, from measures that require health insurance providers, including Medicaid, to cover abortion services to others that switch Maine back

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to a presidential primary or eliminate the religious exemption for childhood vaccinations for schoolchildren.

The last successful people's veto in Maine was in June 2018, when voters overturned a law enacted by the Legislature that would have repealed ranked-choice voting after residents approved it at the ballot box.

So far only one group has formed a political action committee to collect funds to support a people's veto campaign. That PAC, Mainers for Health and Parental Rights, hopes to veto the law that eliminated philosophical and religious exemptions for school vaccines. The group has filed only its initial registration and has not reported any campaign donations or expenditures.

The Secretary of State's office has 10 days to review the requests and approve a petition for circulation. If not enough signatures are certified, then the law takes effect. If enough signatures are certified, current law remains in place until the voters vote on the issue at the next statewide or general election. □

Special Session...

(Continued from Page 1...)

During Monday's Special Session, Republicans stated that their decision to block the other bonds was rooted in the uncertainty of the state's budget situation as well as there not being an emergency to pass any bonds other than transportation prior to January. While the Legislature just passed the state's two-year biennial budget, Republicans are anticipating a supplemental budget proposal next year. However, Governor Mills has said there is no supplemental budget planned for January. The Fiscal Year 2020-2021 budget passed along bipartisan lines by two thirds of the Legislature and signed into law earlier this year by Governor Mills anticipates as much as \$300 million worth of bonding.

While Democrats control the House and Senate, they don't have the two-thirds' vote needed to send bond proposals to voters. The Transportation bond passed during the special session day will appear on the ballot this November. □

Paid Time Off Bill...

(Continued from Page 1...)

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.

The effective date of this law is January 1, 2021. A link to the chaptered law (Public Law 156) may be found online at www.mainelegislature.org/legis/bills/getPDF.asp?paper=SP0110&item=4&snum=129. 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." □

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Governor Mills announces Maine will pursue a state-based health insurance marketplace under the Affordable Care Act

During a health care forum on Thurs., August 29, Governor Janet Mills announced that Maine will pursue a state-based Health Insurance Marketplace that improves the state's ability to fund education and outreach while using the federal HealthCare.gov website to enroll consumers in private health insurance under the Affordable Care Act.

Governor Mills submitted a letter of intent in late August to the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) indicating that Maine will pursue this option for the 2021 health insurance plan year. She expects to introduce legislation to establish the details of the new state-based marketplace when the Legislature reconvenes in January and will be assessing additional options to make health insurance for small businesses more affordable.

"Over the past eight months, my Administration has expanded health care to more than 36,000 people across the state. These are folks who can now see doctors, receive preventive care, treat illnesses, and afford their medications. While I am pleased with the progress we have made, there is more we can – and must do – to make affordable health care available to more people," said Governor Mills. "By pursuing a state-based marketplace, we will be putting ourselves – not the federal government – in the driver's seat when it comes to helping consumers and small employers understand their options for affordable coverage, and we will better insulate ourselves from the attacks on health care that are coming out of Washington."

"Other states that have pursued this model have performed better on both enrollment and the cost of monthly premiums," said Health and Human Services Commissioner Jeanne Lambrew. "This move will allow us to customize our out-

reach to the communities and small businesses we know need access to health care, but who are hard to reach."

"A state-based Marketplace would give Maine the ability to better coordinate with health insurance carriers, Marketplace Navigators, and Assisters," stated Maine Insurance Superintendent Eric Cioppa. "It would also provide the State with direct access to important data about how the system is working, which will in turn enable the State to make data-driven modifications that specifically benefit Maine consumers."

Under the Affordable Care Act, states can choose one of three options for their Health Insurance Marketplaces, which consumers and small businesses use to shop for plans and apply for financial assistance for coverage. Maine currently relies on the federal government to fully run its Health Insurance Marketplace. Under the model announced recently, Maine will have greater control over outreach, marketing, and consumer assistance initiatives, while the federal government will continue to provide its call center and HealthCare.gov where consumers can apply for and enroll in coverage. The Mills Administration is also exploring the possibility of transitioning from this model to the third option, a fully state-run Marketplace in the future.

Under this approach, the Maine Bureau of Insurance would still oversee the individual and fully-insured group markets. It would also continue "plan management," or engagement with insurance carriers on the HealthCare.gov plan offerings.

If legislation passes to create a state-based Marketplace using the Federal Platform, then Maine will submit a plan to CMS for approval. DHHS can manage the cost of this activity with some of the additional federal funding that will result from Maine assuming control over its

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Marketplace's outreach and education.

The decision announced today will not affect the upcoming open enrollment period in November 2019, which will proceed in the same way as previous open enrollment periods. Still, DHHS will work with community partners to increase awareness and promote shopping for plans that meet the needs of Maine families and businesses.

The Governor announced the decision at *All In: A Forum on Health Care Coverage and Affordability in Maine*, an event held at the Maine Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) regional office in South Portland in collaboration with the Maine Bureau of Insurance. The forum invited national and local experts to discuss strategies that have worked in other states, mobilize public and private organizations to develop solutions to rising costs, and build upon the progress the Mills Administration has made to ensure every person in Maine can access health care. □

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Key updates to the Maine Human Rights Act become effective September 19

The Maine Human Rights Commission (Commission) announced in August that there will be some key updates in the Maine law barring discrimination and retaliation – the Maine Human Rights Act (MHRA) – that will become effective as of September 19, 2019. The MHRA applies in employment, housing, places of public accommodation, education, and extension of credit in Maine, and prohibits discrimination in those areas based on a person’s membership in a protected class; protected classes vary in different areas of jurisdiction but generally do include innate characteristics such as race, sex, age, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, and the like.

While most recent MHRA amendments are technical or clarifying in nature, “there will be some significant changes to the law that we want to flag for attention,” said Amy Sneirson, the

Commission’s Executive Director. According to Sneirson, the Commission wants to share this information so employers, housing providers, places and businesses that serve the public, schools, and those extending credit can consider if they should change practices and policies before the MHRA changes next month.

Related to employment, the MHRA will change to:

- ♦ Clearly state that a leave of absence may be a “reasonable accommodation” requested by an employee related to protected class status.
- ♦ Include new standards and terms that apply related to workers who are pregnant. The law will clarify an employer’s duty to provide reasonable accommodations for pregnant workers, define what is a “pregnancy-related condition” and describe what reasonable accommodations for

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“FocusMaine Intern Experience” is creating excitement about careers in Maine, helping address Maine’s workforce challenges

In partnership with Educate Maine, FocusMaine recently concluded the third year of the *FocusMaine Intern Experience* (FMIE). More than 600 interns from 40 employers across Maine took part in the summer program of social, recreational, and professional development events available to interns at participating employers.

The program aims to connect Maine summer interns with each other, other employers, and Maine’s quality of life. The theory is that by developing stronger connections to Maine and seeing the diversity of work opportunities in the state, young people will be excited about starting their careers in Maine. This will help address Maine’s workforce challenges and meet the needs of employers in all job sectors across the state.

Feedback from interns who participated in the 2019 FMIE indicates the program had a positive impact. Some of the feedback included comments such as:

- ♦ “Living in Maine my whole life I knew that I wanted to stay here, but FMIE opened my eyes to the large number of employment opportunities that are available here.”
- ♦ “FMIE made me more confident that Maine is a great place to live and work.”
- ♦ “I had never been to Maine before and had no idea what to expect, but now I love it here and can see myself

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Maine Human Rights Act... (Continued from Page 7...)

pregnant workers may include.

- ◆ Tell employers that if they ask a prospective employee about their prior compensation before making an offer of employment, that question can be considered evidence of unlawful employment discrimination.

Related to housing, the MHRA will change how a tenant or prospective tenant with a disability can demonstrate that their assistance animal complies with Maine law. Currently, the MHRA limits certifying providers to those holding five specific credentials, but the MHRA amendment will include other licensed providers who know of the disabled person's need for the animal.

Related to privately- or publicly-owned spaces open to the public (or places of public accommodation), single-user bathrooms will have to be usable by any person regardless of their sex. This will help many people access bathroom

facilities without confusion or harassment, such as families with young children, people accompanying persons with disabilities who need assistance in the bathroom, and people who are gender non-conforming.

- ◆ It will become unlawful for a "single-occupancy toilet facility" (a restroom for use by one user at a time or for family or assisted use, and that has an outer door that can be locked by the occupant) to be designated as usable only by members of one sex.
- ◆ A single-occupancy toilet facility may be identified by a sign, as long as the sign does not indicate that the facility is for use by members of only one specific sex.

Related to all areas of jurisdiction in the MHRA, several general definitions will be clarified.

- ◆ A new definition of "gender identity" will be added. This does not in any way add new protections, because the MHRA has since 2005 protected persons discriminated against due to their actual or per-

ceived gender identity within the category of "sexual orientation."

- ◆ The term "aggrieved person" will be updated to clarify for the public that a person can bring a complaint if they are in or are perceived as being in a "protected class" (a term also being defined), or if they are associated with person in protected class. This is already how the Commission interprets the scope of the law.

The Commission encourages people wanting to know more about these changes to review the enacted versions of LD 666 and LD 1701, which can be found via the Legislature's website. "Educating the public about updates in the law, in the hopes of avoiding disputes, is always better than investigating or litigating complaints filed about accidental violations of new MHRA provisions by well-intentioned employers, housing providers, and public accommodations," said Sneirson.

For further information, please contact the Maine Human Rights Commission at www.maine.gov/mhrc. □

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.

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- 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



**A record-breaking 100 companies make
“Best Places to Work in Maine” list this year —**



Best Places to Work in ME

On Thurs., August 22, the Maine State Council of the Society for Human Resources Management (MESHRM) has announced the winners in the 14th annual “Best Places to Work in Maine” program. This year, 100 companies met the criteria of a “Best Place to Work in Maine,” the most since the program’s inception in 2006.

The “Best Places to Work in Maine” (BestPlacestoWorkInME.com) list recognizes companies that have established and consistently fostered outstanding workplace environments. The organization that manages the program, Best Companies Group, gathered information from all registered organizations including employee benefits, workplace policies and employee responses through a comprehensive satisfaction survey.

Participating companies receive an Employee Feedback Report in an effort to help them identify their strengths and find opportunities to continue building a better workplace. The report summarizes employee engagement and satisfaction data and includes employees’ written comments. The report is used by many organizations to make significant improvements in their workplace culture.

The program is part of a long-term initiative to encourage growth and excellence in companies throughout the state.

The 100 winners, categorized by number of U.S. employees, will be revealed in ranked order at an awards celebration on October 2, 2019, at the Augusta Civic Center. A complete list of the winners will be featured in a statewide publication produced by *Mainebiz*.

The 2019 “Best Places to Work in Maine,” listed alphabetically, are:

Small Employer Category (15-49 U.S. Employees)

- ♦ Albin, Randall & Bennett;
- ♦ Arkatechture;
- ♦ CCB, Inc.;
- ♦ Chase Custom Homes;
- ♦ Colby Co. Engineering;
- ♦ Fluid Imaging Technologies, Inc.;
- ♦ Hersey EyeCare;
- ♦ Kennebec Federal Savings;
- ♦ Landry/French Construction;
- ♦ Main-Land Development Consultants, Inc.;
- ♦ Maine Information Network;
- ♦ MPX;
- ♦ Octane Marketing;
- ♦ Oxford County Mental Health Services;
- ♦ Oxford Federal Credit Union;
- ♦ Page One Web Solutions;
- ♦ Planson International;
- ♦ Portland Webworks, Inc.;
- ♦ Purdy Powers & Company;
- ♦ RICH EXTERIOR SOLUTIONS;
- ♦ Sabattus Regional Credit Union;

- ♦ Saco Valley Credit Union;
- ♦ SFX AMERICA;
- ♦ Spinnaker Trust;
- ♦ Trademark Federal Credit Union;
- ♦ TruChoice Federal Credit Union;
- ♦ Trueline;
- ♦ VL Tammaro Oil Co.; and,
- ♦ Workgroup Technology Partners, Inc.

Medium Employer Category (50-249 U.S. Employees)

- ♦ Allagash Brewing Company;
- ♦ Allen Insurance and Financial;
- ♦ Avesta Housing;
- ♦ Bath Savings Institution;
- ♦ Bernstein Shur;
- ♦ CES, Inc.;
- ♦ Community Care;
- ♦ Community Health Options;
- ♦ Connectivity Point Design & Installation LLC;

Continued on Page 11...

**Thomas College
to offer
professional
development
programs in both
Augusta and
Waterville this fall —**

Professional development programming at Thomas College will help develop your employees – and, in turn, help your company address the difficulty of training and retaining employees in a tight labor market. Now in its third year, Thomas’ professional development series has helped more than 50 businesses train more than 200 employees right here in Central Maine. New this year is a one-day seminar, “Recruiting and Retaining Employees: Your Company’s Most Important Asset,” for Human Resources professionals, supervisors, and hiring managers.

The Harold Alfond® Institute for Business Innovation (HAIBI) at Thomas College offers a total of six programs (1-day, 3-week, and 6-week programs); the first program begins October 1, and the last program starts November 5. This fall, HAIBI is continuing its partnership with the Buker Community Center to offer two programs (Leadership Symposium and Effective Teamwork) in Augusta.

“We’re really excited to be able to offer these programs this fall. Employers, both small and large, are telling us how important it is to quickly train employees in these specific subjects and to have these new skills immediately put to use in the workplace,” said Mike Duguay, executive director of the Harold Alfond® Institute for Business Innovation.

For more information and to register, please visit www.thomas.edu/training. Celebrating its 125th anniversary, Thomas College offers undergraduate and graduate degrees in programs ranging from business, entrepreneurship, and technology, to education, criminal justice, and psychology. In addition to the Harold Alfond® Institute for Business Innovation, Thomas College is also home to the Center for Innovation in Education. □

FocusMaine Interns... (Continued from Page 7...)

starting my career here.”

- ♦ “It was nice to see such a network between businesses that show interest in Maine graduates.”

FMIE hosted a variety of professional development events including a career exploration fair in Augusta, a panel of early career professionals sharing best practices for making the most of their internships, and a panel of young professionals sharing tips on how to leverage internships when job searching. Interns also had the opportunity to learn about entrepreneurship and start-ups, as well as numerous opportunities to network with FMIE employer partners. Social and recreational events for interns included welcome and farewell get-togethers, hiking, kayaking, and more.

“FocusMaine is working closely with our partners for the FocusMaine Intern

Experience to create excitement among young people about Maine as a great place to live and work,” said FocusMaine President Kim Hamilton. “There is a rich body of research that demonstrates the long-term benefits of internships for the interns themselves and for employers. We will all benefit from more young people seeing the great opportunities and connections that exist here and deciding Maine is where they want to build their careers. Continuing to expand this program across the state is front and center for us and critical to growing FocusMaine’s signature sectors.”

“Feedback from interns about the opportunities FMIE facilitates to experience Maine has been overwhelming positive,” said Jason Judd, executive director of Educate Maine, the organization that manages FMIE in partnership with FocusMaine. “We expect FMIE to grow in the number of employers and interns participating as well as its impact across sectors. With more young people excited to live and work in Maine, we hope to make real progress in addressing Maine’s workforce shortage.”

The 2019 cohort of interns were primarily college students, half attending college in Maine, who interned at employers of all kinds – large companies, small startups, nonprofits and state and municipal governments – in various regions of Maine. Many interned with employers in FocusMaine’s targeted sectors, (aquaculture, agriculture and biopharmaceuticals.) The majority indicated they are Maine residents. An estimated 25 percent are from outside of Maine.

Employers who partner with FMIE must meet a set of standards for their internship programs, including that their interns are paid. For many employers, FMIE enhances already robust internship programs. The initiative has created a network of employer partners who share best practices with one another and work collaboratively to improve the experiences of their interns.

For more information, please visit focusmaine.org/fmie or email focusmaineinterns@gmail.com. For a recent NewsCenter Maine story on FMIE, please visit <https://bit.ly/2lxQIVU>. □

“Those who want to make changes [to workers’ compensation] miss the point that they can not achieve their goals without throwing the compromise off balance.”

—Maine Sunday Telegram, September 13, 1992

Let’s all work to maintain that delicate balance.



MEMIC

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Fresh programs, new workforce training this fall at Maine's community colleges

As Maine continues to face a severe workforce shortage, the state's community colleges are offering up new programs and facilities to fill the gap. Students returning to Maine's community colleges this fall are finding new academic programs, new opportunities to demonstrate workforce skills training, new facilities and simulation labs that give them the hands-on training they need to succeed in today's workforce.

"We want to give our students access to a high-quality education so they can begin productive careers and begin realizing their financial goals," said David Daigler, president of the Maine Community College System (MCCS).

The new offerings are all part of the community college's focus on constantly evaluating and responding to the state's economic needs. Some of the most exciting new offerings were developed with special funding.

New state funding earmarked in 2017 for workforce development was used to build or expand 10 degree and certificate programs in the trades and technologies. At the same time, MCCS created new regional centers for skills training in manufacturing, commercial driving and nursing – all in high demand right now.

In addition, less than a year after being awarded a \$3.6 million grant from the Harold Alfond Foundation, MCCS used those funds to launch 11 new workforce training programs this fall. Those programs include medical assisting at Eastern Maine Community College (EMCC) and Southern Maine Community College (SMCC); welding programs at Kennebec Valley Community College (KVCC) and SMCC; and, a computer support program at Central Maine Community College (CMCC). Demand for the new programs is very high – there were 235 applications for 40 spots in EMCC's new one-year medical assisting program.

Among the new offerings and opportunities at the community colleges this fall:

- ◆ **New classes and courses:** CMCC, in Auburn, is offering three new degree options this fall in plumbing and heating, HVAC/R, and facilities maintenance and management. York County

Community College (YCCC), in Wells, has launched new certificate programs in additive manufacturing, community mental health, and hospitality and tourism management. KVCC, in Fairfield/Hinckley, has expanded its sustainable construction program to add new courses, certifications, and workshops that offer short- and longer-term training in skills, including timber frame joinery and new building and material technologies.

- ◆ **One-year certificates for high school students:** In ongoing partnership with the state's CTEs, Maine's community colleges are exploring new ways to collaborate and recognize the work of high school students even before they graduate. In one new program at EMCC, dual enrollment students at United Technology Center, the regional career and technical high school near EMCC, can earn a new one-year certificate in small business even before they graduate high school. That means graduates can either get an Associate's degree in business management at EMCC in just one year, or go to another institution with a year of college credit.

- ◆ **Badging:** One of the newest ways to demonstrate specific skills and academic accomplishments in today's marketplace is with digital badges. EMCC in Bangor and CMCC have launched new badging initiatives this fall – and will be adding new badges moving forward. Most of the initial badges are in what employers say they need most – so-called "soft skills" such as creative problem solving, collaboration, and critical thinking. Other badges are for industry-specific skills such as hand and power tool safety.

- ◆ **New facilities and equipment:** NMCC in Presque Isle has a new nursing simulation center and a newly remodeled gymnasium. NMCC is also adding a pneumatic robotic arm to their precision machining program, a virtual anatomy table in the life science courses, a cloud-based conferencing system for the emergency medical services program, and a

Best Places to Work... (Continued from Page 9...)

- ◆ Coretelligent;
- ◆ cPort Credit Union;
- ◆ Damariscotta Bank & Trust;
- ◆ Day's Jewelers;
- ◆ DeBlois Electric, Inc.;
- ◆ Dechra;
- ◆ Dielectric;
- ◆ Downeast Credit Union;
- ◆ Drummond Woodsum;
- ◆ Evergreen Credit Union;
- ◆ F. A. Peabody Company;
- ◆ Finance Authority of Maine;
- ◆ Good Shepherd Food Bank;
- ◆ GreenPages Technology Solutions;
- ◆ Gulf of Maine Research Institute;
- ◆ Harriman Associates;
- ◆ Infinity Federal Credit Union;
- ◆ Katahdin Trust Company;
- ◆ Knickerbocker Group;
- ◆ Maine Credit Union League & Synergent;
- ◆ Maine State Credit Union;

Continued on Page 12...

hydraulic training simulator with electronics for the diesel hydraulics program. CMCC has new and expanded athletic fields, with lights and a synthetic surface. The complex includes NCAA-sized competition fields for baseball, softball, and soccer.

- ◆ **E-sports at CMCC for athletes and scholars.** CMCC just opened a new 1,600 square-foot high-tech e-sports arena for its new e-sports competitive team. The competitive video gaming facility has state-of-the-art Alienware Area-51 Threadrippers, five console stations with Xbox One, PS4 Pro, and Nintendo Switch, and a Twitch broadcast booth for live streaming matches. CMCC is part of the National Association of Collegiate eSports (NACE.) CMCC is also offering a new e-sports management degree program this year. NMCC is also starting an e-sports team this fall.
 - ◆ **Cyber Security Excellence:** SMCC's cyber security program was recently designated as a National Center of Academic Excellence in
- Continued on Page 13...*

Best Places to Work...
(Continued from Page 11...)

- ♦ MAS Medical Staffing;
- ♦ Midcoast Federal Credit Union;
- ♦ Milestone Recovery;
- ♦ MMG Insurance;
- ♦ National Distributors, Inc.;
- ♦ NorthEast Charter & Tour Co., Inc.;
- ♦ Patriot Subaru of Saco;
- ♦ PeoplesChoice Credit Union;
- ♦ Pines Health Services;
- ♦ Sebago Technics, Inc.;
- ♦ SeniorsPlus;
- ♦ SymQuest;
- ♦ Systems Engineering;
- ♦ The County Federal Credit Union;
- ♦ The Nonantum Resort;
- ♦ Town & Country Federal Credit Union;
- ♦ University Credit Union; and,
- ♦ Wings for Children and Families.

Large Employer Category
(250 Or More U.S. Employees)

- ♦ athenahealth;
- ♦ Bangor Savings Bank;
- ♦ Burns & McDonnell;
- ♦ Consigli Construction Co., Inc.;
- ♦ Darling's;
- ♦ Edward Jones;
- ♦ Grove Collaborative;
- ♦ Hancock Lumber Company;
- ♦ Harvard Pilgrim Health Care;
- ♦ Huber Engineered Woods;
- ♦ Hussey Seating Company;
- ♦ InterMed P.A.;
- ♦ Kennebec Behavioral Health;
- ♦ Machias Savings Bank;
- ♦ MaineGeneral Health;
- ♦ NFI North, Inc.;
- ♦ Publishers Clearing House;
- ♦ Redington Fairview General Hospital;
- ♦ Summit Natural Gas of Maine;
- ♦ T-Mobile - Oakland;
- ♦ TPx Communications;
- ♦ Tyler Technologies; and,
- ♦ Wayfair.

Endorsing partners of this program include Maine State Chamber of Commerce, 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., Maine State Chamber of Commerce, and Human Resources Association of Southern Maine. □

E2Tech Council hosts...

Recharged! Maine's 2019 Energy Legislation

Wednesday, September 25 ♦ 7:30 to 10:00 a.m.

Hannaford Hall, Abromson Center, USM (88 Bedford St., Portland)

With substantial new renewable energy-related legislation enacted in the First Session of the 129th Legislature, we can expect rapid change in Maine's energy marketplace. The question is: How will this affect you and your business? What opportunities and challenges are likely?

In conjunction with the Maine State Chamber of Commerce, E2Tech will convene leading experts and policy professionals to dive in on these topics on Wed., September 25 in Portland. Speakers will include several of Maine's leading energy thinkers, representing a variety of perspectives, followed by a lengthy time for Q&A.

Now is the time to get involved in this fast-moving policy area. The moderator will be Michael Stoddard, executive director of the Efficiency Maine Trust. He will provide a high-level overview of the most significant energy legislation that passed this past session.

Other speakers include Dan Burgess, director of the Governor's Energy Office, who will provide the administration's perspective; Jeremy Payne of the Maine Renewable Energy Association; Jim Mitchell of Mitchell Tardy Jackson, sharing a utility viewpoint; and, Steve Hudson of Preti Flaherty representing industrial consumers.

Coffee and networking begin at 7:30 a.m., followed by the panel from 8:00 until 10:00 a.m. This forum is your chance to learn what changes to Maine's energy policy occurred as a result of the last legislative session, what drove the changes, the possible effects on Maine's place in New England energy markets, and what the future holds, all in an interactive and engaging format. Register at E2Tech.org. □



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Working Together To End Sexual Abuse in Maine

September 12-14
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360 Canco Rd ~ Portland, Maine

WHO WILL BE ATTENDING?

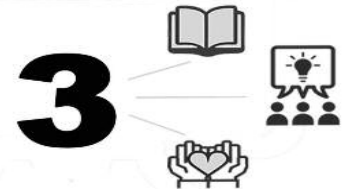
- PARENTS & CAREGIVERS
- SCHOOL NURSES
- SCHOOL LEADERSHIP & TEACHERS
- CLERGY & FAITH LEADERS
- PEDIATRICIANS AND NURSES
- CHILD SERVICE PROVIDERS & ADVOCATES
- THERAPISTS & COUNSELORS
- SOCIAL WORKERS
- LAW ENFORCEMENT
- LAWYERS
- FIRST RESPONDERS
- LIBRARIANS
- CHILDCARE PROVIDERS
- YOUTH DEVELOPMENT GROUPS
- CAMP LEADERS
- MILITARY PERSONNEL
- CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES



ANYONE WHO WORKS WITH KIDS

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

YOU! We can't do it alone,
it will take all of us
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Early College: Student Success Innovations and Maine Career Explorations

By Chancellor Dan Malloy

Busy at work in my second month now as the Chancellor of the University of Maine System (UMS), I've already spent time on each of the seven main UMS campuses. It's not hard to see that all of our universities, acting together, can have an outsized leadership role in helping Maine's businesses find the 158,000 new credentialed workers they need in the next decade.

The day after my appointment was announced, I met with Maine State Chamber of Commerce President Dana Connors and a number of business leaders. That discussion, and the many opportunities I have had since to talk with Maine employers and industry leaders, have crystallized my thinking on the importance of higher education and employer partnerships. MaineSpark is an example of that partnership with a shared goal: 60% of all Mainers will hold a post-secondary credential of value by 2025.

To meet Maine's attainment goals, we must reach people traditionally underserved by higher education. Engaging closely with workforce leaders, we must continue our One University progress. Our priorities, investment, and structure must be focused on improving service to students, eliminating barriers, and expanding access points to highly relevant programs drawn from all of our academic resources.

Our Early College program, which is well on its way to its goal of expanding enrollment to 5,000 Maine high school juniors and seniors by 2022, provides strong examples of higher education innovation and impact.

Just over 60 percent of the 12,000 students who graduate from Maine's high schools each year enroll in college within a year. Nearly a third of these college-bound students leave Maine for out-of-state institutions and will be less likely to come back to start their careers in Maine.

It's critical to the State's well-being that we inspire and prepare more students for post-

secondary education. We must also attract more of our college-bound students to our affordable, high-quality public universities, keep them from year-to-year, and graduate them on time and ready to work in Maine. The University of Maine System's Early College progress puts us at the forefront of efforts nationally to advance college aspirations and readiness, attainment, affordability, and opportunity.

In the last academic year, we teamed up with our local school partners to provide 3,513 Maine students with low and no-cost opportunities to earn college credits and build college confidence. The 21,570 credit hours earned by these high school students equates to a \$5.6 million tuition savings for their families.

To build on this progress, we have launched a new statewide ExploreEC portal that allows students a chance to view and enroll in any of our Early College courses. Parents and school counselors use the portal to guide students in this process and approve student applications.

We have also created new Early College Career Exploration Certificates that provide juniors and seniors a chance to earn approximately \$3,000 in free college credits. The certificates are not industry credentials but allow Maine high school juniors and seniors a chance to explore careers with critical workforce needs across the state.

Early College Career Exploration Certificates offered through the University of Maine at Fort Kent will be available this fall through 103 Maine high schools and include nursing and health care; forestry; behavioral science and human services; criminal justice and law enforcement; and, environmental and biological careers.

The University of Maine at Machias was our first campus to offer Early College Exploration Certificates in Maine Careers, with four students earning the recognition as part of their high school graduation ceremonies this spring. Most of UMM's programs are available online and include teaching, psychology, recreation, and business.

Community Colleges... (Continued from Page 11...)

Cyber Defense Education by the federal National Security Agency and the Department of Homeland Security.

These new programs and initiatives are all evidence of the critical role Maine's community colleges play in educating the state's workforce. The system serves about 36 percent of all public college students in Maine and offers nearly 300 options in more than 140 occupational fields. The system also stays focused on its core mission: More than 75 percent of community college programs are the only ones of their kind in the state. □

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

The University of Maine at Augusta also offers Early College Career Exploration Certificates in French and Computer Information Systems-Cyber Fundamentals (CIS/Cyber). Early College at UMA can also put students on paths to an Advanced Certificate in Unmanned Aircraft Systems Operations and the state's only accredited dental assisting program at UMA's Bangor campus.

It is never too early to think about college but we do have fast approaching deadlines for fall enrollment. Please encourage Maine high school juniors or seniors and their families to visit <https://academics.maine.edu/early-college/> to learn more and to register for courses for the fall.

The work we will do in the months and years to come will build a stronger workforce for our immediate future and create generations of opportunities for Maine families. I am glad to be on the job and am eager to see how much we will accomplish together. □

Chancellor Dan Malloy began his service as the 13th leader of the University of Maine System on July 1, 2019. Malloy's prior public sector executive leadership includes two terms as Governor of Connecticut and 14 years of service as the Mayor of Stamford, Connecticut. He is the former Rappaport Distinguished Visiting Professor at Boston College Law School and the 2016 John F. Kennedy Profile in Courage Award Recipient.

Strategies for attracting and retaining older workers is critical for Maine employers

by Barbara Babkirk

In 2010, the Maine State Chamber's *Making Maine Work: Critical Investments for the Maine Economy* noted that the largest projected changes in Maine's population (by age) impacting the workforce fell in the age 55-75 category: Age 20-29: -28%; Age 30-44: 0%; Age 45-64: -10%; **Age 55-75: +73%**. We've all heard, or even made, the usual assumptions:

- ♦ "The boomers are leaving! The boomers are leaving!" (the workforce);
- ♦ One in five employers believe boomers want to retire as soon as they can tap benefits; and,
- ♦ 71% believe their "boomers" employees have adequate funds to retire.

And yet, the majority of Baby Boomers (U.S. adults born from 1946 to 1964) are still in the labor force, and the oldest among them are staying in the labor force at the highest annual rate for people their age in more than half a century. According to a report by the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), "Older workers will be an organization's largest source of talent in the next two decades." In 2018, 29% of Boomers ages 65 to 72 were working or looking for work. Beyond that, consider these facts:

- ♦ Boomers are extending the traditional retirement age for "a purpose and a paycheck;"
- ♦ Four out of five people return to work after retiring from a primary career; and,
- ♦ 25% are financially secure to move into retirement.

Continued on Page 15...



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WORKPLACE WELLNESS

HEALTHY EMPLOYEES MAKE CENTS!

Five keys to wellness programs that maintain profitable aging workforce

EDITOR'S NOTE: The New Retirement: A Paradigm Shift is a recurring column by Gloria Dunn-Violin in the North Bay Business Journal. She is a professional speaker, certified retirement life coach, and a business consultant through her company, Having a Life After Making a Living. She has over 25 years' experience in organizational behavior and development as a trainer, facilitator, consultant, business adviser on aging and retirement and coach. The article below was published in 2016 and can be accessed at <https://www.northbaybusinessjournal.com/opinion/5569844-181/wellness-employee-profitability>.

Healthy employees are more productive. Profitability is a result of productivity.

That's one reason why almost half of the employers in the United States offer wellness programs. Since more workers plan to continue in the workforce past age 65, businesses that institute wellness programs to meet the needs of aging employees "will see big dividends," states a white paper published in June by the Transamerica Center for Retirement.

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) provides a second reason. Workplace wellness programs are supported as a means of reducing chronic illness by improving health and controlling health care costs. The latest data shows an employer's ROI (return on investment) is \$6 for every \$1 spent on workplace wellness.

Also, a study published in the January 2013 issue of the Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine showed workplace health promotion programs can reduce average worker health costs by 18 percent.

Savings are even larger for programs involving older workers, reported the American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (ACOEM).

Jonathan P. Dugas, Ph.D., and colleagues at The Vitality Group, Chicago, combined data from two major studies to estimate savings from reductions in seven risk factors or medical conditions typically addressed by workplace wellness programs: physical inactivity, low fruit and vegetable intake, smoking, overweight/obesity, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and alcohol abuse.

"The results suggested that — if all heightened risk factors could be reduced to their 'theoretical minimums'— total medical care expenses per person for all working age adults would be reduced by about \$650, or approximately 18 percent. The possible savings increased with age up to 28 percent for older working adults and retirees," according to the ACOEM news release.

Continued on Page 15...

Workplace Wellness...

(Continued from Page 14...)

Employees ages 55 to 65 “are the fastest-growing component of the workforce,” says Kristin Tugman, senior director of health and productivity at Unum, a large Maine-based provider of disability insurance. “They represent significant skills and experience,” she adds. “Employers don’t want to lose this expertise.”

To support this older generation, employers need to set up “productive aging” programs, advocates Tugman. “Many employers have the building blocks of a productive aging program,” she notes. “They just haven’t been able to connect the dots.” Productive-aging programs include at least five components:

1. **A rigorous demographic analysis** of an employer’s aging workforce today and projected into the future. This knowledge is an essential foundation for productive aging efforts.
2. Employee wellness programs with **specific older-employee components**.
3. **Chronic-condition management, perhaps with special emphasis on obesity.** A third of all U.S. workers have at least one chronic health issue, and the percentage is higher among older employees.

4. **Flexible work environment.** Flexibility for older employees is broadly seen as a needed employee-retention and job-enrichment benefit.

5. **Job-enrichment programs.** “Programs that value older workers and seek to leverage their motivation with respect to their return to work and their staying at work can be effective in this effort,” Tugman wrote in her research paper. As an example, she referred to job transition programs that took physical pressure off older workers while allowing them to make greater contributions of their skills. “How do we use her brain instead of just her brawn?” she stated.

Kaiser Permanente’s employee workplace-wellness activities have only been operating since 2010, but the effort is already returning real health gains. From 2009 to 2012 among its estimated 200,000 employees, the health care company documented a 5 percent overall improvement in blood pressure levels, a 7 percent improvement in cholesterol levels, a 12 percent decrease in smoking, and a constant body mass index average even while the rest of the nation was getting heavier.

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. □

Older Worker Retention...

(Continued from Page 14...)

Integrating a multi-generational workforce requires strategies from employers that include:

- ♦ View age as a *diversity* issue and address it with specific actions and goals to attract and retain boomers;
- ♦ Discuss retirement with older workers from emotional, physical, social, and financial perspectives (only 6% of U.S. employers currently do this);
- ♦ Analyze your workforce and especially look at workers’ ages, to better understand the numbers and how they will impact getting the job done in the near future;
- ♦ Conduct “stay interviews” with prospective retirees as a way of learning what would it take to keep them employed on a full time or part time basis;
- ♦ Develop a realistic company-wide succession plan based on facts, not assumptions, about who is in your workforce; and,
- ♦ Engage and retain boomers with specific programs, such as flexible work arrangements, multi-generational mentoring, career counseling to clarify new directions or “Second Acts,” health and wellness programs; “returnships” for older workers to retrain and/or refocus their talents and skills on boomers; focus specific talent recruitment efforts; phased retirement; workshops on legacy and life planning following retirement; and, skills training for new careers. □

Barbara Babkirk is a Master Career Counselor and principal at Heart At Work Associates, a career counseling and outplacement firm in Portland. She has a particular expertise in working with baby boomers, born between 1946-1964, who comprise 28% of Maine’s population. They often have more difficulty securing work than younger job seekers after a lay-off or career transition. Barbara is a member of Maine’s Department of Labor Workforce Board Committee on Older Workers which is exploring ways to engage employers in how to attract and retain experienced workers. She can be reached by emailing barb@heartatworkassociates.com, or by calling Career Counseling & Outplacement Services at (207) 775-6400.

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**on the evening of Wednesday, October 30
Augusta Civic Center**

Drawing from our state's rich past and working toward a bright future, Mainers are known for their leadership, their work ethic, and their innovation. In 1863, Joshua Chamberlain led the way in winning the Battle of Gettysburg. In 1948, Margaret Chase Smith led the way as the first woman to serve in both houses of congress. Every morning, Maine leads the way as the first state to see the sun rise. As you can see, Maine's Bicentennial Theme is "Lead the Way," aptly derived from the state motto.

In commemorating the State of Maine's Bicentennial Anniversary (Maine200), the Maine State Chamber of Commerce plans to celebrate "leading the way" during our 2019 Annual Dinner on the evening of Wednesday, October 30 at the Augusta Civic Center. We are hoping to convene a panel of Maine Governors to discuss the state's rich leadership history, the contributions they have made, and the legacy of their service. *All seven Maine Governors have been invited, confirmations pending.* As part of the Maine200 celebrations, the event will be televised / streamed live through News Center Maine and moderated by Pat Callaghan.