



**GROWING  
MAINE'S  
WORKFORCE**

# MAKING MAINE WORK

CRITICAL INVESTMENTS FOR THE MAINE ECONOMY

# TO THE READER:

October 2013

Just this past January, Fitch Rating Services downgraded the State of Maine's bond rating. One reason they cited is that Maine's economy is "hampered by weak demographic trends."

What are they talking about? University of Southern Maine economist Charles Colgan explains:

*"From 1990 to 2010, the state lost more than 20% of its population of 18-34 year olds. During the next decade nearly 200,000 people will reach retirement age in Maine. If there is no in-migration to the state, the state's workforce will shrink significantly between now and 2020. Workforce constraints are currently masked by the recession and lack of recovery, and are much more serious in rural places than urban places, but the problem is so large that no part of the state from Portland to Portage will be untouched by the lack of workforce, if nothing is done."*

It is a simple truth that if we are to grow our economy and incomes, **Maine will need more people in the workforce** – people who currently are not here, who will move to Maine communities, participate in the economy, raise families, and make Maine their home. So far, we in Maine have only tiptoed around the issue. We have developed a handful of programs aimed predominantly at encouraging young Mainers to stay in the state. These are good, but they are too narrow in focus and too limited in resources.

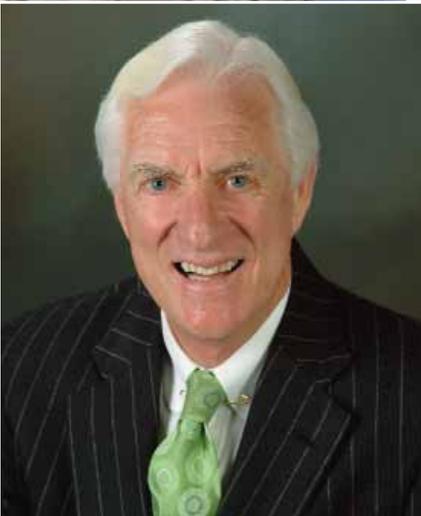
We need to think more broadly. We must sell Maine to the whole world – people of different cultures, races, and skills. Greater diversity would have additional benefits. We expect Maine children to grow up and compete in a **global economy**; we should expose them to a **global population**.

Growing the workforce also involves making sure that everyone who is already here has a chance to **work productively**. Today, we have people with disabilities, adults without post-high school degrees, refugees, retirees, and others who are not **fully engaged in the workforce** but could be. It is a loss for them, and a loss for Maine's economy. There are Maine companies that can teach us how to re-engage these workers.

This report is about people who will be available to do the work in Maine in the coming decades, and how we can find, attract, and retain them. **They are our future.**



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## MAKING MAINE WORK: CRITICAL INVESTMENTS FOR THE MAINE ECONOMY

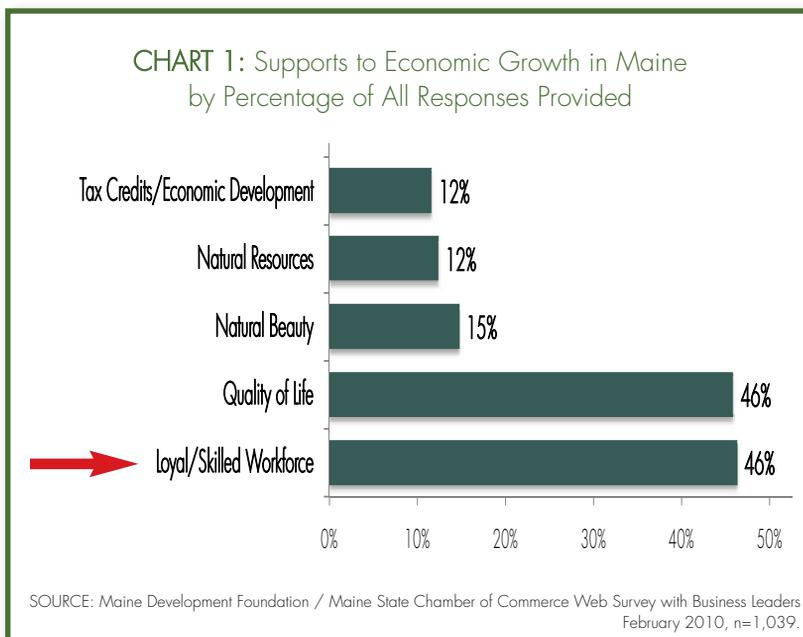
*Making Maine Work: Critical Investments for the Maine Economy* is a comprehensive action plan for improving productivity, growing the economy, and providing a higher quality of life for all Maine people. Released in July 2010, the original report and recommendations were the result of a joint effort between the Maine State Chamber of Commerce (MSCC) and the Maine Development Foundation (MDF). It explored the investments needed to grow the economy and the factors that influence those decisions.

Along with *Making Maine Work*, MDF published two background reports: *Maine's Investment Imperative II: Unleashing the Potential*, an in-depth review of more than 100 reports and recommendations on key issues influencing investments in Maine, and the results of the *Investment Imperative Survey with 1,000 Maine Businesses*.

# MAKING MAINE WORK

The *Making Maine Work* series provides strategies for raising incomes and improving productivity. Central to any strategy is an available and skilled workforce.

This report builds on a number of prior reports released by the Maine State Chamber of Commerce and the Maine Development Foundation as part of its *Making Maine Work* series. The reports stem from a 2010 survey of 1,000 Maine business leaders about the critical issues they face, in which Maine's loyal and skilled workforce was cited as a top benefit. We need to ensure that it remains so.



This report is about one aspect of the workforce problem – the size of the workforce. It is theoretically distinct from the issue of workforce skills. However, in the real world, the two are interrelated. Maine's economy will not have a workforce with diverse skills unless there are enough people of diverse talents to fill the openings. We need both quantity and quality. This report discusses why this is so, and how we might approach growing Maine's workforce again.





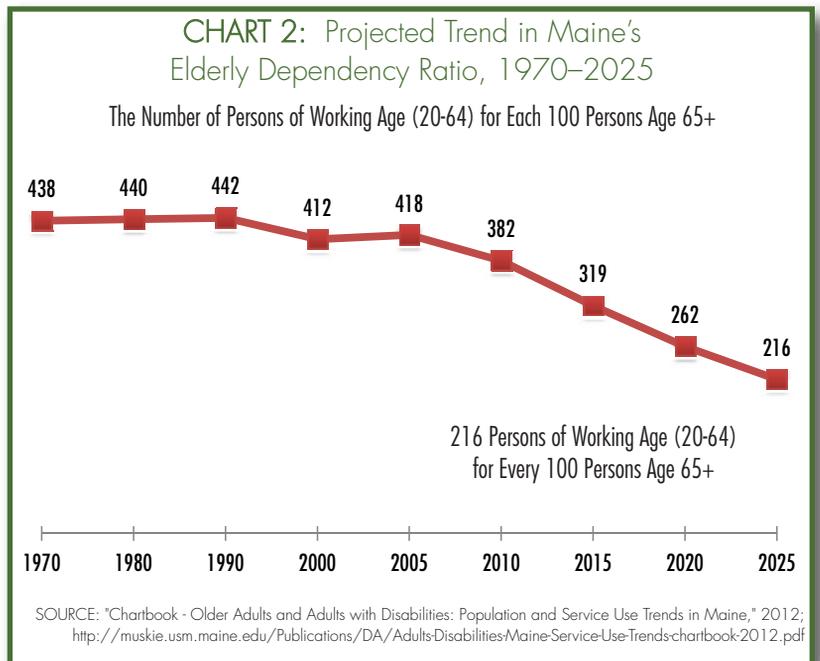
# THE RELATIONSHIP OF WORKFORCE SIZE AND PROSPERITY

Many reports have been done on the skill training challenges facing the Maine workforce. These are critical issues. There are Maine workers here today who need a job. There are young people coming up through the education system who must be prepared to succeed in a changing economy. These Mainers must be a top priority for policy makers and for employers if we are to grow the economy at all.

This report's primary focus is on a *different* aspect of our challenge – the **size of Maine's workforce** moving forward. The fact remains that even if we solve the skills challenge for workers today, we will not have enough workers to fill the need tomorrow. We believe that both issues need to be addressed – **quantity and quality**. We do not have the luxury of choosing which one to address first. Both need our attention now.

Why does size matter? Can't Maine grow its incomes and economy without growing its population? The answer is no, for two reasons.

First, **our population is aging**. If we do not attract and retain more young people, our "dependency ratio" – the number of persons of working age compared to retirement age – will decline almost in half by 2025. This will create an even greater burden on working age people to support the health and pension needs of those who are retired.



Secondly, historically Maine has prospered in periods of *population growth and diversification*. After the Revolution, new settlers tripled Maine's population in 30 years, leading to statehood. Later, the Irish came to Maine and helped build the railroads; the Italians came and quarried granite; the Swedes came and farmed in Aroostook; the French came and worked in our mills. Every new generation of immigrants arrived with new cultures and religions, and often new languages. Each had to gain acceptance from the residents already here. Each contributed to making the Maine we love today.

Maine cannot stand still and remain a productive, lively, and prosperous state. By standing still, we lose what we value about Maine. We must move forward.

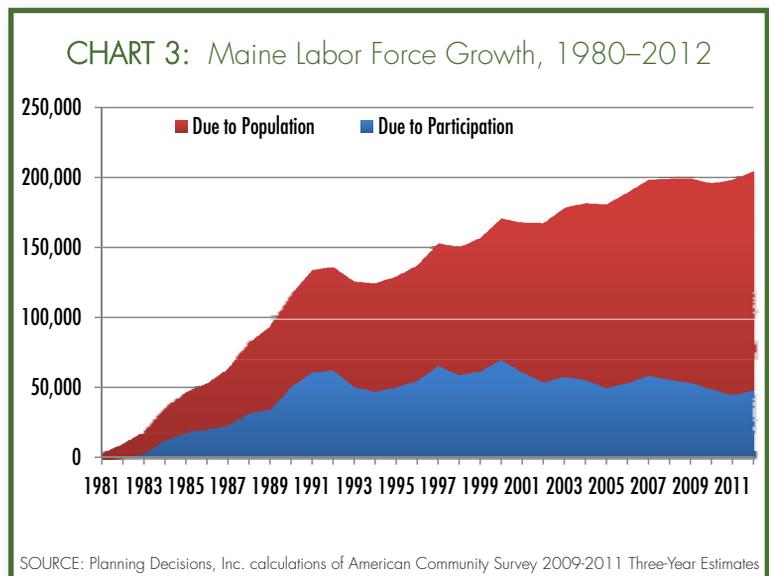


# THE OUTLOOK FOR MAINE'S WORKFORCE



From 1980 to 2010, Maine's workforce increased from about 500,000 to 700,000, or 40%. About a quarter of the growth, or 50,000 new workers, was due to the increase in the number of women working outside of the home. At the end of World War II, three in ten Maine women of working age (defined as 16 to 64) had a job outside of the home. By 1980, it was five in ten. By 2010, it was 7.5 in 10.<sup>1</sup>

The second source of growth in the workforce was population increase. A major part in the early 1980s was due to the entry of the Baby Boom generation in the workforce. In-migration of people to Maine also played a role. Population growth accounts for about three-quarters of the total workforce increase from 1980 to 2012.



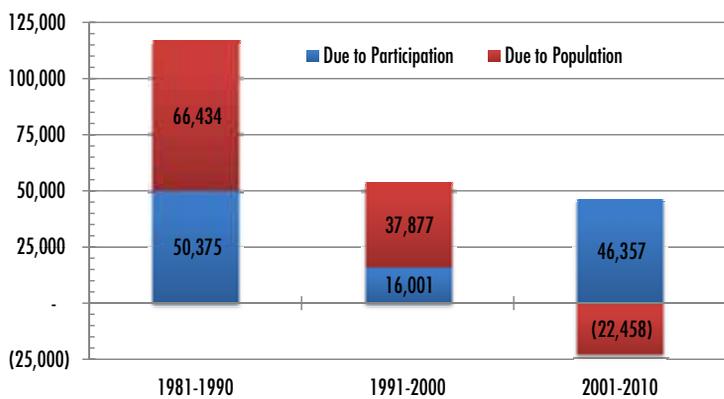
However, both of these sources of growth have slowed down progressively during this 30-year period. The baby boomers were completely in the workforce by 1990 and are now entering what has traditionally been retirement age. Women's workforce participation peaked by 2000 and does not have room to move much higher.

From 1981 to 1990, Maine's workforce grew by 12,000 a year. Increased participation from women accounted for 43% of the growth. From 1991 to 2000, Maine's workforce grew by 5,000 per year, and the growth from participation was only 30%. From 2001 to 2010, the workforce grew by only 2,500 per year. Participation rates (in part due to the recession) actually declined.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Sources: "Trends in the Maine Labor Market, Historical trends and projections to the year 2018," Maine Department of Labor, Center for Workforce Research and Information; and the American Community Survey, 2009-2011 three-year estimates.

<sup>2</sup> Maine Department of Labor data on labor force; calculation of contribution of population and participation is by Planning Decisions, Inc.

**CHART 4: Components of Civilian Labor Force Change in Maine by Decade, 1981–2010**

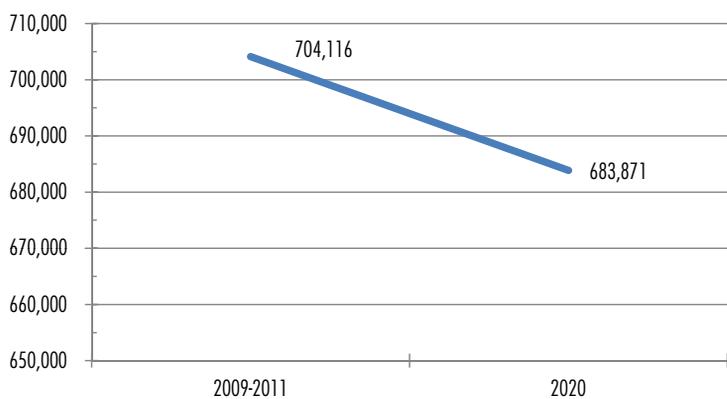


SOURCE: Planning Decisions, Inc. calculations of American Community Survey 2009-2011 Three-Year Estimates

The effects of this declining growth rate are being felt already. High tech businesses are reporting a serious problem finding qualified information technology workers. Hospitals are unable to fill nursing jobs. Manufacturers leave jobs unfilled.

The challenges we face today are just the start. If current trends do not change, if population growth continues on its projected path, and if participation rates do not change, the civilian workforce will cease growing entirely and decline by 20,000 by 2020.<sup>3</sup>

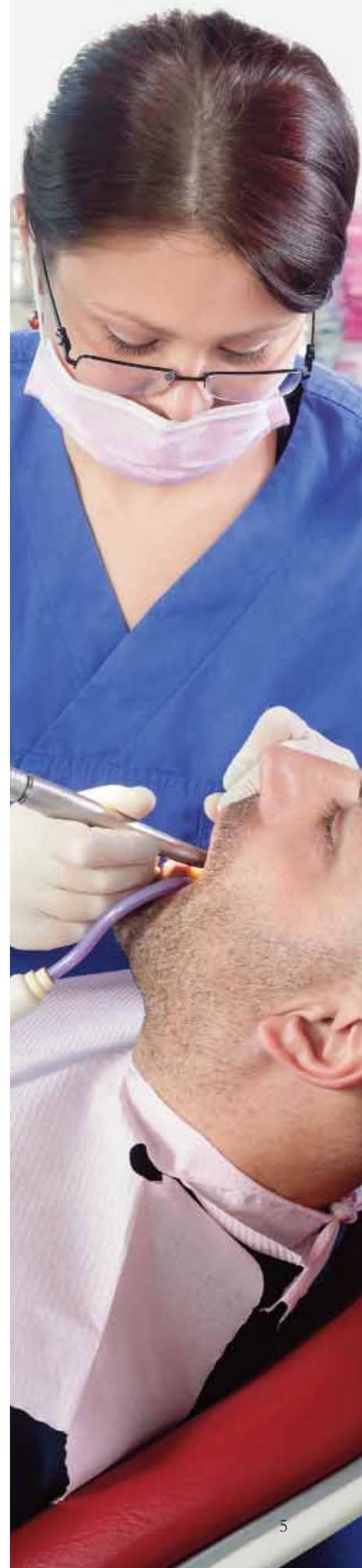
**CHART 5: Civilian Labor Force Size in Maine, 2009–2020 (If no Change in Migration or Participation)**



SOURCE: Planning Decisions, Inc. calculations of American Community Survey 2009-2011 Three-Year Estimates

Is this future inevitable? It doesn't have to be. The following pages present a strategy for turning these trends around.

<sup>3</sup> Population projections to 2030 for Maine by the State Economist can be found at <http://www.maine.gov/tools/whatsnew/index.php?topic=Economics+and+Demographics+News&id=501735&v=article2011>; projections of workforce by Planning Decisions, Inc.





# TWO STRATEGIES TO GROW THE WORKFORCE

How can Maine change the equation? How can Maine increase the size of its workforce?

There are two basic strategies.

The first is to increase participation in the workforce among the existing population. It was the increase in workforce participation among one group – women – that explained a major part of Maine’s workforce growth in the late 20th century. There are other groups whose participation in the workforce could increase: young people not currently in school or the workforce; adults without a post-high school degree; people 65 and over; veterans; and, people with disabilities. Each of these populations is considered in the following pages.

The second strategy is to attract people from outside the state to come live and work here. This is happening already with refugees. The challenge for Maine is to help them adapt and become working members of the economy. It is happening already with retirees as well. The challenge is to encourage them to use their talents, networks, and financial resources to participate in Maine’s economy. It is not happening enough with young college graduates and young families, and these are the groups that need more aggressive recruiting. It’s only happening on a small scale with foreign nationals – largely in medical or research institutions – and this, too, is a group that needs to have an expanded presence.

Actions that will achieve both strategies are presented on the following pages.

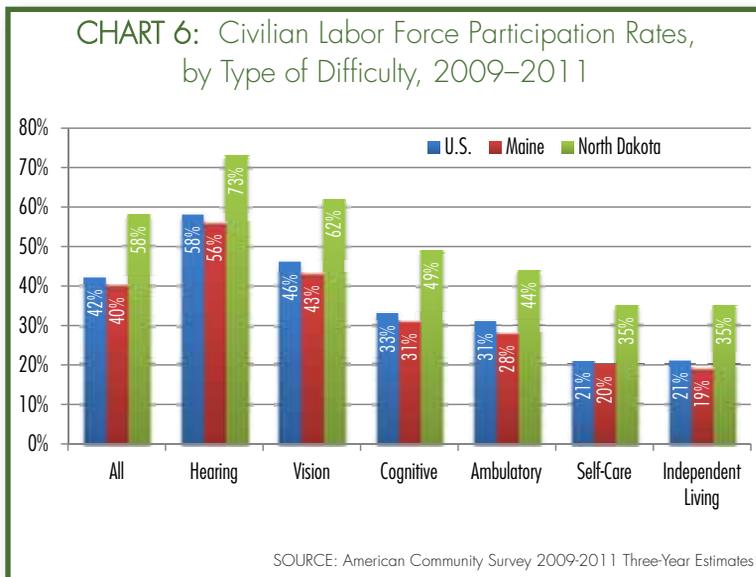
# INCREASING PARTICIPATION

## PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES...

GOAL: Add 10,000 to the labor force by 2020

Maine has a higher proportion of people with disabilities (15.5%) than the rest of the country (12%).<sup>4</sup> Part of the reason is that our population is old. Part of the reason is that many of our jobs involve hard physical labor.

A lower percentage of Maine people with disabilities are working than the U.S. average. Below are labor force participation rates for different kinds of disabilities for Maine, the United States, and North Dakota – another rural state where many people work in tough outdoor jobs, but with a much higher workforce participation rate than Maine for people with disabilities.

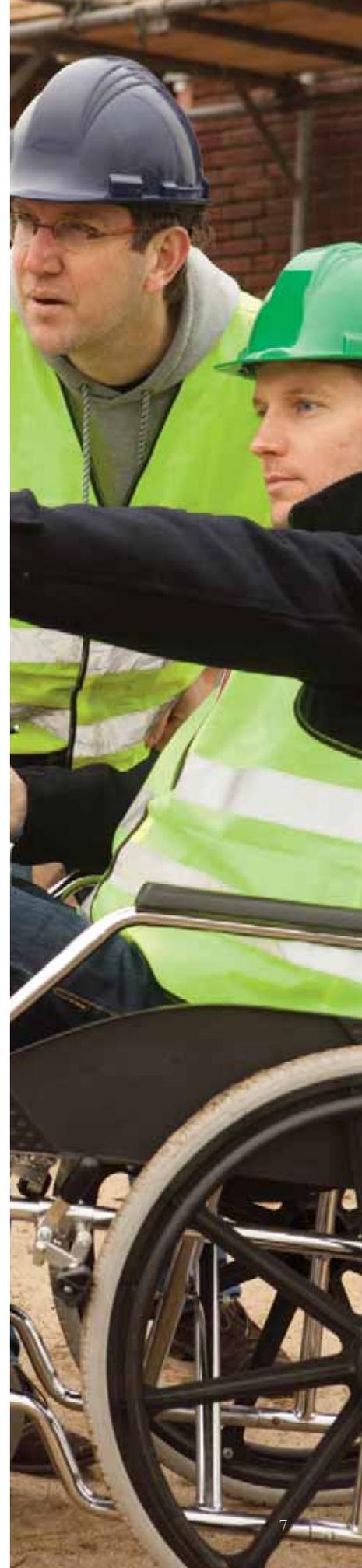


If Maine adults with disabilities participated in the workforce at the same rate as other adults with disabilities around the country, Maine’s workforce would grow by nearly 2,000. If Maine adults with disabilities participated in the workforce at the same rate as North Dakota’s adults with disabilities, the workforce would grow by approximately 18,700. This is an untapped resource right in our midst.

Adults with disabilities tend to have less education than adults without disabilities. Therefore, education and training programs are important for their success. More than 800 people with disabilities got jobs in 2011 after getting training from the Maine Bureau of Rehabilitation Services.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> American Community Survey 2009-2011 Three-Year Estimates

<sup>5</sup> “Snapshot 2012: Maine Workers With Disabilities,” Maine Department of Labor, Bureau of Rehabilitation Services





However, even more important than government are private employers who interview, hire, and accommodate people with disabilities in their workplaces. In the spring of 2012, Maine businesses started an affiliate chapter of the U.S. Business Leadership Network in order to increase employment of people with disabilities across the state. The Maine Business Leadership Network, currently housed within the Maine State Chamber of Commerce, is led by an Advisory Board that includes representatives from Procter & Gamble, L.L. Bean, U.S. Cellular, the Maine Chapter of the Society for Human Resources Managers, the Aroostook Center Mall, and several state agencies. Procter & Gamble/Tambrands in Auburn has adopted an inclusion model for hiring based upon a successful program implemented in other states by Walgreens.

Helping people with disabilities to get work is not only compassionate social policy; it is also in our economic self-interest. Our goal for this sector is to raise the participation rate of people with disabilities to 50% by 2020 – a rate halfway between the U.S. and North Dakota averages. This would add 10,000 people to Maine's workforce.

### **SENIORS 65 YEARS AND OVER NOT CURRENTLY WORKING...**

**GOAL: Add 12,000 more workers by 2020**

Older people are one demographic group that is migrating to Maine. Many tend to move into relatively expensive housing along the coast or lakeshores, have significant assets, have national networks of professional acquaintances, and are looking for new experiences or challenges in their lives.

As people are healthier, they live longer and are looking to stay active longer. More older people are also working longer due to the shock to retirement assets – house values and stock portfolios – from the recent recession.

For all of these reasons, labor force participation is rising for the over 65 age group. Maine's labor force participation rate for the 65+ population is 16.4%, just above the national average. But our neighbor, New Hampshire, has a 19.3% participation rate for older workers.<sup>6</sup> If Maine can achieve New Hampshire's rate of older worker workforce participation by 2020, we can add 12,000 to our state's labor force.

<sup>6</sup> American Community Survey 2009-2011 Three-Year Estimates

CHART 7: Potential Growth of Senior Workforce

	Maine 2020 population	Labor force at current rate	Labor force at NH rate	Difference
65-69	94,333	28,344	34,489	6,146
70-74	77,744	12,703	16,061	3,357
75+	116,306	5,429	7,504	2,075
<b>Total</b>	<b>288,383</b>	<b>46,476</b>	<b>58,054</b>	<b>11,578</b>

SOURCE: Planning Decisions, Inc. calculations of ACS 2009-2011 Three-Year Estimates, and Maine Office of Policy and Management

Older workers have a lot to offer Maine employers but more must be done to help employers understand how to tap that potential. Older workers can benefit from jobs with flexible hours that make use of their social skills and experience. Maine employers must continue to adjust their workplaces to accommodate this talented and underutilized group.

### DISENGAGED YOUTH...

**GOAL:** Move 6,000 into the workforce

There are 17,000 young adults in Maine, age 18 to 24, who have no degree beyond high school, are not working, and are not in school.<sup>7</sup> This is 15% of all young adults in Maine – more than one in seven. The mix of a loss of traditional mill jobs, family breakdown, and economic recession is creating a cohort of Maine’s younger generation who is disengaged from the traditional anchors of jobs, family, and community. Our rate of disengaged youth is higher than any other state in New England. If we could reduce this rate by a third to 10% by 2020 – the current rate in Massachusetts, North Dakota, and Iowa – we would add 6,000 additional workers to Maine’s workforce.

### VETERANS...

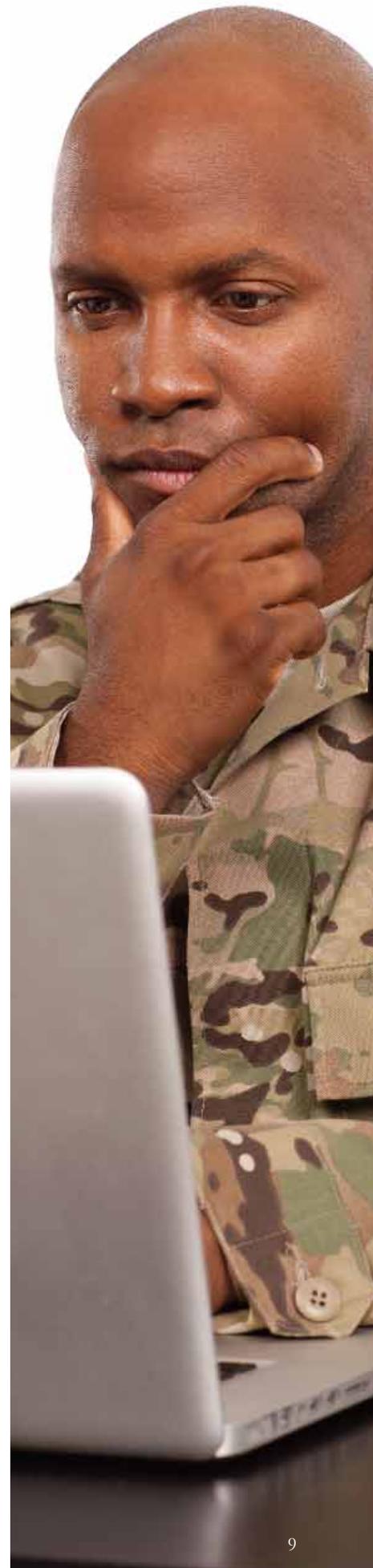
**GOAL:** Add 5,000 new workers by 2020

There are about 75,000 veterans in Maine between age 18 and 64. More veterans are coming home to Maine from wars abroad every year. Of Maine’s working age veterans, about three in four – 55,000 – are in the workforce. This is lower than the national average (75.6%). It is much lower than next door in New Hampshire (80.3%).<sup>8</sup>

At a minimum, achieving the veterans’ workforce participation rate of New Hampshire by 2020, we will add 5,000 additional people to Maine’s workforce. These people have made enormous sacrifices for our country, and we owe it to them and ourselves to help them to participate fully in the Maine economy.

<sup>7</sup> Kids Count Data Center, Annie B. Casey Foundation, 2011 <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/acrossstates/Rankings.aspx?ind=5063>

<sup>8</sup> American Community Survey 2009-2011 Three-Year Estimates





# ATTRACTING NEW PEOPLE TO THE WORKFORCE

## YOUNG PEOPLE...

**GOAL:** Add 20,000 more workers by 2020

There is great concern over the loss of young people in Maine. The data indicates that Maine as a whole does not have an “out-migration” problem, as much as a birth rate problem. Births in Maine have declined by 40% since the height of the Baby Boom from nearly 24,000 in 1960 to just below 13,000 in 2010.<sup>9</sup> Our birth rate per thousand people is only 75% of the national average.<sup>10</sup> This has resulted in smaller school populations in much of the state.

Once young Mainers become adults, their movement pattern tends toward out-of-state in their early 20s, while the state has a net in-migration for those in their late 20s. We essentially break even at the state level, while movement in the state has created much regional disparity.

**CHART 8:** Average Annual Migration Experience of Young Mainers, 2007–2011

Age	Population a year ago	Moved away to another state	Moved in from out of state	Moved in from abroad	Net change	Current population	% change
18 and 19	36,732	3,458	3,355	198	95	36,827	0.3%
20 to 24	80,917	6,942	5,216	794	(932)	79,985	-1.2%
25 to 29	71,843	3,851	4,167	396	712	72,555	1.0%
30 to 34	71,321	2,565	2,416	247	98	71,419	0.1%
35 to 39	82,467	1,815	1,708	147	40	82,507	0.0%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>343,280</b>	<b>18,631</b>	<b>16,862</b>	<b>1,782</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>343,293</b>	<b>0.0%</b>

SOURCE: American Community Survey, 2007 to 2011 Five-Year Estimates. A comparison of two tables: “Geographical Mobility In The Past Year By Age For Residence 1 Year Ago In The United States” and “Geographical Mobility In The Past Year By Age For Current Residence In The United States.”

The problem for Maine is that it is not good enough to just break even among young people with regard to migration. We need a positive inflow or our declining native population will lead to a shrinking workforce.

One way to increase the young population is to expand college enrollments. According to data from Thomas College, there are 75,000 college students in Maine. According to “Life After UMaine,” a March

<sup>9</sup> “Trends in the Maine Labor Market: Historical Trends and Projections to the Year 2018,” Maine Department of Labor, Center for Workforce Research and Information

<sup>10</sup> Kaiser State Health Facts, 2010, <http://www.statehealthfacts.org/profileind.jsp?cat=2&sub=11&rgn=21>

2013 study by the University of Maine's Office of Institutional Research, 61% of 2010-2011 University of Maine baccalaureate graduates stay and work in Maine. Likewise, 85% of Thomas College graduates<sup>11</sup> and 92% of employed Community College System graduates are working in Maine.<sup>12</sup> The proportions are lower for students who come to school from outside of the state, but they are not insignificant – for University of Maine students whose families live outside the state, 21.5% stay and work here after graduation.<sup>13</sup> The conclusion for the workforce is simple: higher college enrollments in Maine yield a larger talent pool of young people available to Maine employers. So, encouraging and helping institutions of higher education in Maine – both private and public – to grow enrollment will also help the workforce.

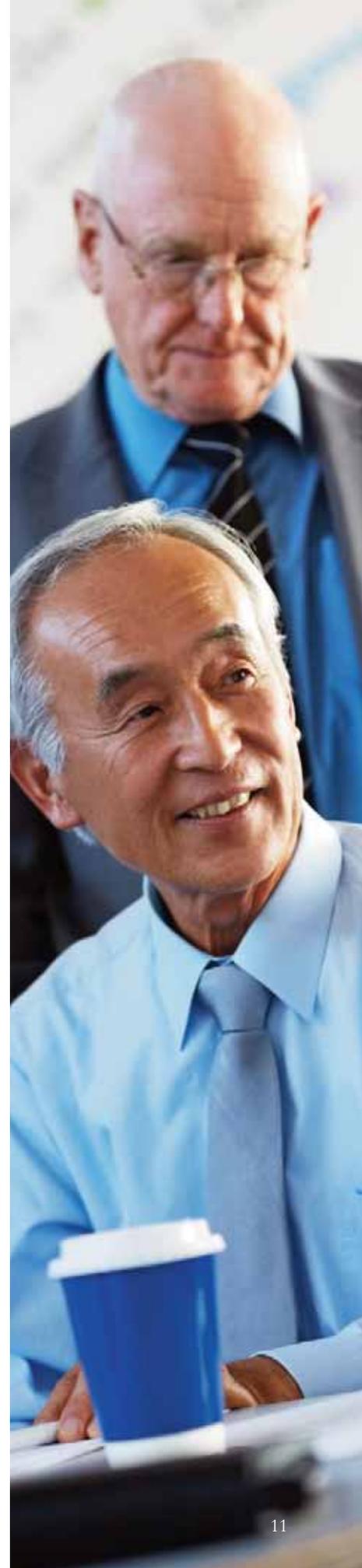
Since our demographics indicate that the home-grown population of college-age students will not be growing, one place to look is abroad. Many secondary schools and colleges in Maine have increased their enrollments of foreign students, with particular emphasis on the fast-growing Asian market.

The Maine International Trade Center is assisting in this marketing through its interactive website, *StudyMaine*, a directory of Maine's schools and programs targeted to international students. It advertises Maine's small-town qualities, diverse landscapes, safety, and recreational opportunities.

Another way to expand enrollment is to raise the proportion of college students who might stay and work here, particularly those who come here from out of state. The Maine State Chamber of Commerce is working with 70 Maine businesses to create internships for college students (see [www.InternHelpME.com](http://www.InternHelpME.com)).

Educate Maine is creating internships specifically in information technology (see <http://projectlogin.com>). Internships and summer jobs create valuable work experiences for students, income-earning opportunities, greater awareness that Maine has companies that offer rewarding employment for college graduates, and personal connections to the business community.

If, as a result of these and similar efforts, we can simply improve to a net in-migration to Maine of 1% among those 20 to 39, **we can add 20,000 young people to Maine's workforce by 2020.**



<sup>11</sup> Thomas College President's Office

<sup>12</sup> Maine Community College System website (<http://www.mccs.me.edu/about/facts.html>)

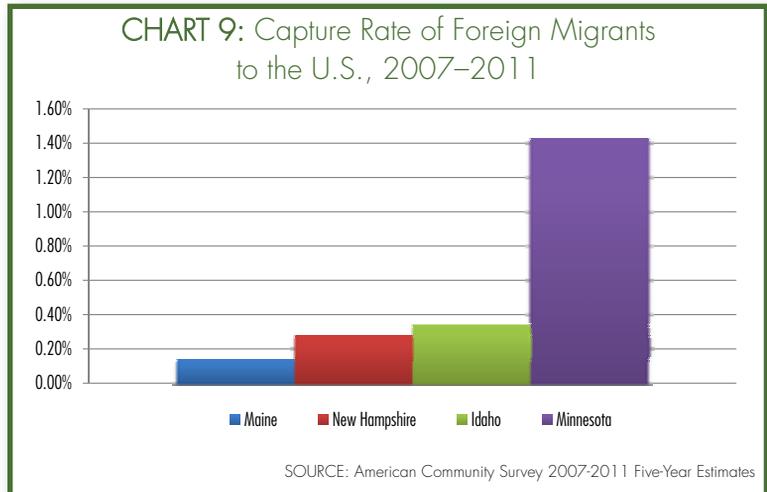
<sup>13</sup> David Silvermail, "Maine's College Graduates: Where They Go and Why (Revisited)", Center for Education Policy, Applied Research, & Evaluation, University of Southern Maine, February 2006.



## FOREIGN WORKERS...

GOAL: Add 12,000 more workers from abroad by 2020

About 1.8 million people move to the United States from abroad each year.<sup>14</sup> Maine captures about 2,600 per year, or 0.14% of the total of all movers to the United States. We do not do as well as other states with cold climates. New Hampshire captures twice the rate of movers from abroad. Idaho does about three times as well. Minnesota does 10 times as well.



Maine has been a destination for refugees in recent years. There are more than 7,000 foreign-born residents in Portland, and more than 3,000 in Lewiston-Auburn.<sup>15</sup> Many are refugees from sub-Saharan Africa.

Refugees are a unique category of immigrant. They are forced to come. Unlike other immigrants, they do not have time to prepare for their transition. They may be disoriented by the cultural changes they encounter.

There are stages that these groups, like the immigrants before them, must go through. Upon arrival, they need help finding housing and food. Soon, they find entry-level jobs in the local economy. Then, they open businesses that cater to their fellow immigrants. Finally, as the younger generation gains in education and confidence, they move up the economic ladder, and diversify their own businesses.

The original Irish immigrants to Maine faced language and cultural barriers but became part of the workforce supporting the state's economic growth. Likewise, the refugees arriving in Portland and Lewiston today are a piece of the solution to Maine's workforce needs in ten years.

There are also foreign immigrants at the other end of the economic spectrum – scientists, doctors, health professionals, and engineers. David Brooks wrote in the *New York Times* in February 2013 that “Immigrants are 30% more likely to start new businesses than native-born Americans ... they are more likely to earn patents ... a quarter of new high-tech

<sup>14</sup> Planning Decisions, Inc. calculations from American Community Survey 2009-2011 Three-Year Estimates

<sup>15</sup> American Community Survey, 2007 to 2011 Five-Year Estimates

companies with more than \$1 million in sales were founded by the foreign born ... every additional 100 foreign-born workers in science and technology fields is associated with 262 jobs for U.S. natives.”<sup>16</sup>

Maine laboratories, hospitals, and high tech firms are already in the game. According to LuAnn Ballesteros, director of government relations at The Jackson Laboratory, more than 100 foreign nationals from 17 countries are employed at the Laboratory’s Bar Harbor campus in positions ranging from Research Scientist PhDs and Postdoctoral Associates to animal care technicians and computational biologists. According to Executive Director and President Graham Shimmield, the 14 senior scientists at Bigelow Laboratory for Ocean Sciences represent five different countries. *Finding, attracting, and retaining specialized talent from abroad will be an essential factor in Maine’s ability to grow economically in the future.*

Foreign recruitment is a challenge. The fact that Maine is today a generally homogenous state in racial and cultural terms makes it less inviting to many. Foreign workers who bring their families want to be sure their spouses can find a good job. Like any other mover, they want to be sure there are good schools, recreational opportunities, and culture and the arts.

Maine may be lagging today, but we need to step up our performance. If we double our capture rate of foreign movers in the next seven years – in other words, if we achieve New Hampshire’s market share of 0.28% – *we can increase our workforce by 12,000 more than would otherwise occur.*

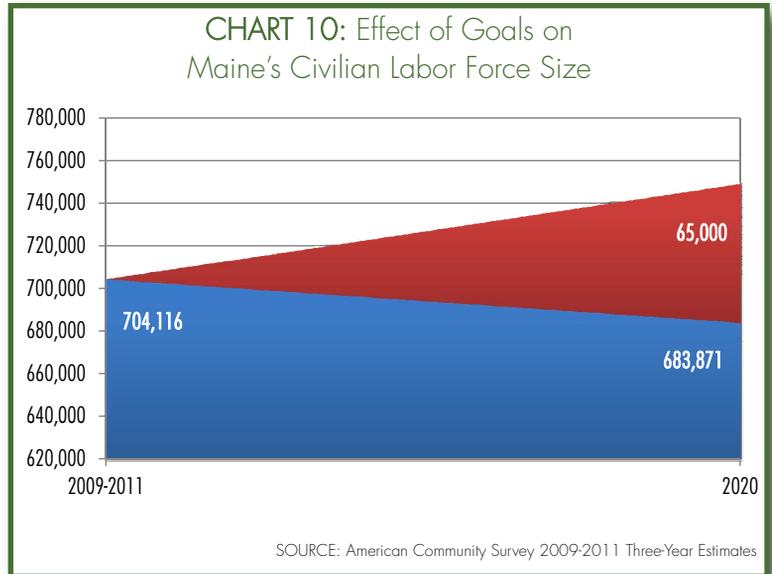


<sup>16</sup> David Brooks, “The Easy Problem,” New York Times, February 1, 2013, [http://www.nytimes.com/2013/02/01/opinion/brooks-the-easy-problem.html?partner=rssnyt&emc=rss&\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2013/02/01/opinion/brooks-the-easy-problem.html?partner=rssnyt&emc=rss&_r=0)



# SUMMARY OF GOALS

The net effect of achieving all of the goals laid out in this report would be to increase Maine’s workforce by 65,000 by 2020. Instead of losing 20,000 workers, we would gain 45,000. Instead of struggling with the effects of a diminishing workforce, we would be gaining on the competition.



The lesson of this exercise is that there is no one action, no one group that can turn Maine’s numbers around. Half of the goal is met by attracting new in-migrants. Half of the goal is to be met by increasing the participation in the workforce by a population that is already here – people with disabilities, disaffected youth, older people, and veterans.

# OTHER BENEFITS OF GROWING THE WORKFORCE

This report focuses on growing the workforce. It is not about the side benefits that Maine would gain from achieving these goals.

However, these other benefits deserve mention. There is *social value in engaging young people*, getting them off the streets, away from temptations of drugs and crime, and focused on a job and career and family. There is social value in *helping people with disabilities achieve* the dignity, respect and income that a job can offer. There is value in *giving veterans the opportunity they deserve* after all they have done for us. There is benefit in providing opportunities for fulfillment and income for older people. There is benefit to everyone in having people of diverse cultures, foods, music, and religions in our midst – especially to our children, who must grow up with the confidence and skills to navigate and thrive in a multicultural world.

So, these are the goals. How do we get there? It is not the job of this report to provide a “how-to” for creating specific strategies for each of these groups. But, we can point to people in Maine and elsewhere who are already providing models of how to do it – and suggest ways the state as a whole can move forward.





# WHO DOES WELL IN INCREASING WORKFORCE PARTICIPATION?

## FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES...

Procter & Gamble (P&G) opened a new packaging customization facility at its Tampax plant in Auburn in 2011. It is called a “flexi-center,” partly because it has multiple packaging capabilities, but also because it provides work accommodations for all kinds of people. The plant employs over 60 workers, of whom more than 35% are individuals with physical and developmental challenges, as well as disabled veterans.



In its press release announcing the initiative, the company said: “This new pilot location truly highlights P&G’s diversity and inclusion model that is deeply rooted in its DNA, bringing together individuals from different backgrounds, ethnicity, cultures, talents and a wide variety of abilities. It is the company’s belief that diverse organizations are highly innovative.”<sup>17</sup>

## FOR DISENGAGED YOUTH...

According to its website, [www.jmg.org](http://www.jmg.org), *Jobs for Maine Graduates* (JMG) helps young students who are at risk of dropping out to succeed. Working with local employers, JMG teaches six skill sets: personal, leadership, communication, job attainment, job success, and career development. JMG graduates 96% of its students. The Class of 2000’s JMG students earned 14% more than their counterparts, and 87% of JMG students become successfully engaged in the workforce, military, or continued education within one year of high school graduation.

<sup>17</sup> See <http://news.pg.com/blog/diversity-and-inclusion/new-flexi-center-provides-job-opportunities-individuals-disabilities>

## FOR OLDER WORKERS...

Cianbro, Hollywood Slots, L.L. Bean Bangor Call Center, Merrill Bank, and the University of Maine have all received “Silver Collar Employer” awards from the Maine State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB) for being model employers of older workers. The award “honors employers in Maine whose policies and practices match the needs of mature employees, capturing their skills and experience, strong work ethic, flexibility and enthusiasm.”<sup>18</sup>

## FOR VETERANS...

Builders of Ogunquit’s owner John Mixon hires only veterans and uses all Maine-made materials. Mixon says, “From the heavy equipment operators who dig the holes to pour the concrete foundations that our fine homes are constructed on, to those that lay the carpeting and install roofing or plumbing, we use veterans every step of the way.”<sup>19</sup> His workers are pictured on the right.



<sup>18</sup> Society for Human Resource Management Maine State Council, [meshrm.shrm.org/news](http://meshrm.shrm.org/news)

<sup>19</sup> See <http://buildersofogunquitinc.com/index.html>

# WHO DOES WELL IN ATTRACTING WORKERS FROM AWAY?

The Jackson Laboratory sets a priority of making new employees feel welcome at the Laboratory, in Bar Harbor, and in Maine as a whole. Their foreign-born workers are a diverse group, with many Asians and Indians. As noted earlier, more than 100 foreign nationals from 17 countries are employed at the Laboratory's Bar Harbor campus in positions ranging from Research Scientist PhDs and Postdoctoral Associates to animal care technicians and computational biologists. The Laboratory also provides help for spouses to find employment in Maine.

Bigelow Laboratory actively recruits outside of Maine. Bigelow's 14 Senior Scientists represent five different countries. Approximately 80% of the remaining scientific staff is from outside of Maine, and 10% to 15% are from other countries (Canada, the United Kingdom, Germany, Spain, Korea, and China, among others). Executive Director Graham Shimmield's native country, Scotland, faces problems similar to Maine. Scotland created a task force to engage people who have moved away. The purpose is not to get them to return, but rather to act as spokespeople for Scotland. Many help find investors for the home country. The program includes extensive volunteer training.

New Brunswick, Canada, created a "Population Growth Secretariat" in the provincial government in 2007. It set benchmarks to increase population, attract immigrants, and improve retention of newcomers. Provincial programs focus on four key areas: immigration and international recruitment; retaining immigrants and promoting multiculturalism and diversity; repatriation of former residents and attraction of other Canadians; and, youth retention. From 2006 to 2011, the province's population grew by 2.9%, the highest rate since 1976.<sup>20</sup>

Hannaford Supermarkets are making a concerted effort to hire refugees in Portland. "Hiring refugees is a responsible corporate move," spokesperson Shelly Williams explains. "Maine's population is aging. In 10 or 20 years, the refugees will be holding the jobs and running the businesses." Their efforts have received national recognition from the National Center for Refugee Employment and Self-Sufficiency.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Presentation by Stephanie Eardley, director of Research and Federal Provincial Relations for the Government of New Brunswick's Department of Post-Secondary Education Training and Labour, to the Maine Quality of Place Council, November 2011. See also [www.welcomenb.ca](http://www.welcomenb.ca).

<sup>21</sup> Hannaford Supermarkets website: [www.higheradvantage.org/?p=620](http://www.higheradvantage.org/?p=620)

# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MAINE

## **1 Adopt measurable workforce growth goals for Maine.**

It will take collective action on the part of government, business, and the nonprofit sector in the immediate future to maintain and grow Maine's workforce. The first step is to achieve a consensus on the goal.

We recommend that groups like the Maine Economic Growth Council, in concert with the Governor's Office and legislative leaders, review the information in this report, and, after engaging in broad discussions in Maine, set an ambitious yet achievable goal for overall workforce growth, as well as benchmarks for workforce participation and net in-migration for specific groups.

## **2 Build upon the work of the 126th Legislature's Joint Select Committee on Maine's Workforce and Economic Future to establish an ongoing committee of state policy leaders and private sector interests to guide and coordinate Maine's workforce goals.**

This would be similar to what the Province of New Brunswick has done. It is working. We do not have to invent this path. The committee's work might include efforts like the development of public and private incentives designed to attract young families to Maine, such as tax credits, housing, and education.

This kind of high-level, public-private partnership is effective and necessary in communicating goals, creating public policy discipline, assembling resources, and achieving measurable results. It's also a statement to the business community that Maine is serious about making change, and we are ready to work with you.





# 3

## **Create a private sector Maine Marketing Commission and elevate marketing efforts.**

Maine companies, like L.L. Bean, have prospered through the promotion of their “Maine brand.” Maine also has a growing private sector of creative and savvy public relations experts who serve clients all over the world. They understand what it takes to create a brand, establish message discipline, and target key audiences.

There are several advertising programs in state government that promote food products, tourism, business attraction, and a variety of other important causes. There is no single brand or visual image or message that all of the efforts reinforce. Social media is not getting enough use. If we are going to market the desirability of living, working, and playing in Maine to the rest of the world, we need a more sophisticated effort.

We need to create a Maine Marketing Commission comprised of private sector experts and authorized to work with state government in creating a comprehensive branding, messaging, and marketing effort. Then, we need to up the effort to a higher level.

# 4

## **Promote strategies to build the workforce for each of the groups mentioned in this report.**

**4a.** Establish a statewide platform for young people to access internship opportunities by building out the InternHelpME.com website and growing the number of participating employers to 500 by 2015.

There are 125 Maine employers now participating in InternHelpME.com. This is a key strategy for improving Maine’s attraction and retention of young workers. A concerted effort should be made to increase the employers and offerings on this site. This can grow into the state’s portal for all internship opportunities, recruit individual employers, and connect to established industry-specific intern programs like Educate Maine’s Project Login (<http://projectlogin.com>).

**4b.** Expand the market for jobs for people with disabilities and other groups by growing the Maine Business Leadership Network to 200 businesses by 2015.

The Maine Business Leadership Network (BLN) is a voluntary group of Maine businesses, affiliated with the Maine State Chamber of Commerce, that are working to institutionalize inclusive hiring and employment practices within their companies. This is the place where Maine employers can learn from industry leaders – like Procter & Gamble, Hannaford, L.L. Bean, and

others – how to recruit, train, and retain workers who are disabled, veterans, elderly, or refugees. Maine BLN members also benefit from its national counterpart organization, as well as help on the ground from the Maine Department of Labor and numerous nonprofit organizations in Maine. The Maine BLN is a new effort and currently lists 12 employers as members. This too needs a concerted effort to grow its membership.

**4c.** Double foreign student enrollment in Maine by 2020 by working with the Maine International Trade Center and educational institutions to increase visits by foreign students and their families to Maine.

There were 1,100 foreign students studying in Maine colleges in 2011 and hundreds more at the secondary school level. Increasing enrollment expands the pool of students who may work in Maine. Each student has friends and family back home who learn about Maine through the student's experiences. If the student stays to work in Maine, there is a greater likelihood that their friends and family might move here as well. This is a fast-growing market, and Maine should be aggressive in pursuing such students.

**4d.** Ask all members of the Maine Business Leadership Network to sign the "Work Reimagined" pledge at the AARP website.

The Maine Chapter of the AARP has tools available to help businesses examine their hiring practices to make sure that they are welcoming to older talent. The employer assessment tool ([www.aarpworkforceassessment.org/welcome](http://www.aarpworkforceassessment.org/welcome)) provides a self-guided on-line examination of the company's human resource policies. AARP also has a "Work Reimagined" website for older professionals. It provides networking, articles, job banks, and the opportunity for employers to sign a pledge of openness to hiring older workers (<http://workreimagined.aarp.org>). Currently, three Maine employers have signed on. The goal is for all members of the Maine BLN to sign on.

**4e.** Help disengaged youth get education and job experience by increasing the number of funders/partners for Jobs for Maine Graduates (JMG) from 92 to 250 by 2020.

JMG is a premier program for identifying and supporting students who face barriers to graduation. More businesses need to get involved as partners, to provide business visits, mentoring, part-time jobs, and financial support. We propose that the number of private partners for JMG increase to 250 by 2020.





- 4f. Help veterans readjust to Maine by increasing the number of local chambers of commerce offering veterans help to 25 by 2020.

Several state, regional, and local chambers of commerce are offering a range of services to veterans of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Afghanistan's Operation Enduring Freedom, including mentoring, help with resumes and interview skills, health and recreational activities, and even direct links to employers who are looking to hire (Portland Regional Chamber<sup>22</sup> offers one such example). Successful models should be adopted by every chamber of commerce in Maine.

- 4g. Fund a "welcome center" providing resources to help foreign-trained professionals fully engage in Maine's economy.

Many highly-skilled, foreign-trained workers are seeking to relocate to Maine. They face challenges in adjusting to and fully engaging in Maine's economy. Maine should provide comprehensive cross-cultural case management, including support of and referral for transfer of credits and credentials, accelerated English, and internship and job placement based on proven best practices.

## **5 Study the lessons from Lewiston, Auburn, and Portland in resettling refugees and create a resource that Maine municipalities can use to prepare for and benefit from new community members.**

Communities that absorb large numbers of refugees in a short time period generally experience economic costs and social tensions. They can also experience economic and social benefits. Lewiston and Auburn are the most recent communities to go through this experience, and Portland did so earlier. If Maine is to be a welcoming state to people from foreign countries, we need to learn from what happened and set up the necessary resources to be ready for the next wave. This presents a challenge for municipalities. Cities with refugees may temporarily need funds for English language learners and critical social services, additional housing or resources for housing rehabilitation, and training resources. Groups like the *Mayors' Coalition*, the *Service Center Coalition*, and the *Maine Municipal Association* can play a lead role in assembling these resources and engaging communities across Maine that are experiencing this, or would like to. A shared effort can help municipalities manage the challenges so that Maine as a whole can make the most of these opportunities.

<sup>22</sup> See Portland Regional Chambers' website for more information (<http://www.portlandregion.com/node/22205>). See also Bill Nemitz column of March 28, 2012 [http://www.pressherald.com/news/veterans-advance-in-line-for-jobs\\_2012-03-28.html](http://www.pressherald.com/news/veterans-advance-in-line-for-jobs_2012-03-28.html).

# RESOURCES IN MAINE

There are hundreds of organizations already doing good work with all of the populations discussed in this report. These organizations know resources that are statewide and would be able to refer interested individuals to the appropriate place.

## FIRST STOP FOR HELP IN TRAINING AND HIRING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES...

To get a fellow business person's perspective on what works and what does not in hiring people with disabilities, join the [Maine Business Leadership Network](http://mainebln.org) (<http://mainebln.org>).

The [Maine Bureau of Rehabilitation Services](http://www.mainejobcenter.com) helps employers in recruiting qualified workers with disabilities. They work through [Maine's Career Center](http://www.mainejobcenter.com) offices, located in Augusta, Bangor, Brunswick, Calais, Lewiston, Machias, Portland, Presque Isle, Rockland, Skowhegan, Springvale, and Wilton ([www.mainejobcenter.com](http://www.mainejobcenter.com)).

[Alpha One](http://www.alphaonenow.com/about_us.htm) may be able to help employers with disabled employees meet their special adaptive needs ([www.alphaonenow.com/about\\_us.htm](http://www.alphaonenow.com/about_us.htm)).

## FIRST STOP FOR HELP IN HIRING VETERANS...

Maine's [Career Centers](http://www.mainejobcenter.com) have veteran's representatives to help with job searches, resumes, access to training and education. They are located in Augusta, Bangor, Brunswick, Lewiston, Machias, Portland, Presque Isle, and Springvale ([www.mainejobcenter.com/employment/veterans-services/veterans-reps/index.shtml](http://www.mainejobcenter.com/employment/veterans-services/veterans-reps/index.shtml)).

Several of the larger [local and regional chambers of commerce](http://www.mainejobcenter.com) host programs to engage, mentor, and help returning veterans. Contact your local chamber executive to learn more.

## FIRST STOP FOR HELP IN WORKING WITH "DISENGAGED" YOUTH...

[Jobs for Maine Graduates](http://www.jmg.org) (JMG) is a proven program for identifying and supporting students who face barriers to graduation so that they may succeed in the workplace. In fact, a Department of Labor longitudinal study found that, six years after high school graduation, JMG graduates earned 14% more than other workers their age. JMG programs rely on local businesses to provide mentoring, summer jobs, and funding support ([www.jmg.org](http://www.jmg.org)).





## FIRST STOP FOR SETTING UP INTERNSHIPS AND SUMMER JOBS...

For businesses looking to set up and publicize internships and summer jobs, the *Maine State Chamber of Commerce* website, [InternHelpME.com](http://InternHelpME.com), is a good first stop. For businesses particularly interested in attracting and hiring information technology workers, *Educate Maine's* website [ProjectLogin.com](http://ProjectLogin.com) is an excellent resource.

## FIRST STOP FOR WORKING WITH REFUGEES...

The “*New Mainers-Refugees Workforce Development Project*” was a recent pilot program by Lewiston and Portland’s adult education programs, as well as a number of other social service agencies. It provided job readiness skills for refugees. The initial evaluation shows that the program exceeded its performance goals.<sup>23</sup>

For more information, please contact job counselors Deborah Breiting ([breitd@portlandschools.org](mailto:breitd@portlandschools.org)) or Bridget Kahn ([kahnbb@portlandschools.org](mailto:kahnbb@portlandschools.org)). Both are employed at *Portland Adult Education* ([www.portlandadulthood.org](http://www.portlandadulthood.org)) and can be reached by calling (207) 874-8155 or by mailing 57 Douglass Street, Portland, Maine 04102.

## FIRST STOP FOR WORKING WITH OLDER WORKERS...

The *AARP* has websites to help employers evaluate and improve their company’s personnel practices ([www.aarpworkforceassessment.org/welcome](http://www.aarpworkforceassessment.org/welcome)), and also to participate in a network of older professionals (<http://workreimagined.aarp.org>). The Maine Chapter of *AARP* is interested in participating in policy efforts on the issue, and may be able to help with grants.

For more information, please contact Lori K. Parham, state director for *AARP Maine*, by calling (207) 776-6304, emailing [lparham@aarp.org](mailto:lparham@aarp.org), or mailing correspondence to 1685 Congress Street, Portland, Maine 04102.

For help in getting in touch with older workers in your specific region, the *Coastal Counties Workforce Board* and the *Maine Career Centers* have established “seasoned worker navigators” who specialize in helping older workers navigate the job market. Contact information is below:

- **Aroostook County**  
Stanley Targonski: (207) 760-6300; [stanley.targonski@maine.gov](mailto:stanley.targonski@maine.gov)
- **Washington County**  
Dodie Emerson: (207) 255-1900; [atrica.s.emerson@maine.gov](mailto:atrica.s.emerson@maine.gov)
- **Hancock, Piscataquis, Penobscot Counties**  
Jane Black: (207) 974-3205; [jblack@emdc.org](mailto:jblack@emdc.org)
- **Androscoggin, Oxford, Franklin, Kennebec, Somerset Counties**  
Cindy Johnson: (207) 513-0214; [johnsonemploy@aol.com](mailto:johnsonemploy@aol.com)

<sup>23</sup> See <http://www.portlandmaine.gov/hhs/earmarkvalrpt.pdf>

- **Waldo, Knox, Lincoln, Sagadahoc, Cumberland, York Counties**  
Kerry Kenney: (207) 615-9428; Kerry.Kenney@goodwillnne.org

## FIRST STOP FOR RECRUITING FOREIGN WORKERS...

To hire a foreign worker, employers must document to the U.S. Department of Labor that there are no domestic workers who can or will do the work available. For help in getting this process started, see the [Maine Career Center's website at www.mainecareercenter.com/services/programs/hiring/foreign/index.shtml](http://www.mainecareercenter.com/services/programs/hiring/foreign/index.shtml).

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