

The logo for Focus Maine, featuring the word "FOCUSMAINE" in a bold, sans-serif font. The letter "O" in "FOCUS" is replaced by a green circle. Below the main text is a thin horizontal line, and underneath that is the tagline "CATALYZING JOBS WHERE MAINE'S ASSETS MEET GLOBAL TRENDS" in a smaller, all-caps font.

**FOCUSMAINE**  
CATALYZING JOBS WHERE MAINE'S ASSETS MEET GLOBAL TRENDS

# STRONGER TOGETHER

**RESILIENT AS EVER**

**2020 HIGHLIGHTS  
AND IMPACT REVIEW**

# FOCUSMAINE

FocusMaine is a private sector-led initiative to accelerate the creation of quality jobs in Maine by investing in three of the state's globally competitive and high-growth fields—

Agriculture

Aquaculture

Biopharmaceuticals

—and by strengthening Maine's workforce capacity.

**To spur business growth within these sectors, FocusMaine partners with some of the most impactful nonprofits and private sector leaders in the state. Each brings valuable expertise and passion to this work and helps to catalyze sustainable growth and business confidence in Maine's economy.**

By working together, we are turning our unique capabilities into a common, united force for economic growth in Maine.



**Our goal: growing good jobs in Maine.**

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

When FocusMaine selected its signature sectors—agriculture and food production, aquaculture, and biopharmaceuticals—in late 2017, the country's economy was strong and Maine was especially well positioned to tap into global growth trends and more fully engage its many assets into quality jobs in these sectors.

A little more than three years later, our choice of sectors has proven prescient. While the health and economic effects of COVID-19 remain immeasurable, we know that the impact on lives and livelihoods has been devastating. Yet in the midst of this challenging year, we have seen Maine's food, beverage, and aquaculture businesses, both large and small, capitalize on new strengths and chart new directions. Adaptive, resilient, and creative, these businesses have developed innovative products and opened up new sales channels, and some have even found ways to grow in the face of extreme challenges.

We have also seen Maine's life sciences community step up to meet the country's needs. By solving pressing research and supply chain problems and helping to speed along virus detection and vaccine development, these businesses have solidified Maine's position in the regional life sciences ecosystem.

So, as I reflect on this year, I'm guided by the quote "A smooth sea never made a skilled sailor." A very stormy 2020 has, in fact, tested the strength of our strategy and—more than anything—taught us that we are stronger together.

That is why we have chosen to celebrate the people who are at the center of our strategy. They include our partners who continue to fuel our strategy, the employers who have navigated these new waters, and the people who now call Maine home because they have found new opportunities in our sectors.

In this report you will find inspiration and a better understanding of why our work together is more important than ever. By creating good jobs in high-potential sectors, we can help Maine prosper and enable our communities and families to thrive—even in these challenging times.



**Kimberly Hamilton, PhD**  
President, FocusMaine



*"At this time, when Maine needs multiple pandemic recovery efforts, FocusMaine remains committed to our mission to accelerate job growth in fast-growing markets where Maine has competitive advantages and to retain and attract a workforce for the future. In this way, we are building a more resilient economy and bringing hope to Maine families at a critical time."*

Andrea Cianchette Maker, FocusMaine Co-Chair

*"To retain talent in the state, education must connect to promising career and job opportunities. This is the core reason we created FocusMaine and is at the heart of our partnerships with educational institutions and other committed organizations. By investing together in sectors where Maine is uniquely positioned, globally competitive, and poised for job growth, we are ensuring that today's job seekers can build a bright future right here in the state."*

Michael Dubyak, FocusMaine Co-Chair





# Agriculture & Food Production

A growing demand for healthy and sustainable food has expanded the market for locally sourced and responsibly cultivated food products. Maine's abundant water resources, low-cost land and proximity to some of the largest cities in the nation have made the state a renowned producer of quality food and positioned its agriculture, food and beverage industries for exceptional growth.

**What we do:** FocusMaine supports partners and programs that help food and beverage businesses grow. The programs launched under the FocusMaine umbrella meet a range of business needs from early-stage start-ups seeking mentorship to start their businesses to established companies looking to scale their business strategy, processes, and capacity. Mature companies can access expert guidance for strategic, data-driven market expansion.

**Our Partners:** Coastal Enterprises, Inc., Maine Center for Entrepreneurs.

## THREE-YEAR RESULTS:

- Served 80 companies throughout the state.
- Invested more than \$2M in business support services and program partners to strengthen the food economy.
- Provided 20 companies with customized consumer and market data to sell more products outside the state.
- Launched four new food and beverage programs to help early-stage, established and more mature food businesses: **Top Gun** Food-themed Programs, **Tastemakers** for investment connections, **Cultivator** for business planning, and **MarketShare** for growing markets.
- Built a network of 50+ food and beverage industry experts.
- Catalyzed more than 190 jobs in Maine's food and beverage sector and helped propel sector growth.
- Introduced more than 60 investors to food and beverage entrepreneurs.



*"FocusMaine's support of CEI's Tastemakers Program is a great partnership that helps food-based enterprises secure the resources they need to grow and thrive. Particularly, during this time of COVID19, we are pleased to help Maine food entrepreneurs be nimble and resilient in the face of this challenge and are proud to be a part of their stories."*

- Gray Harris, Senior Vice President, Food System Strategies, Coastal Enterprises, Inc.



*"Pemberton's Gourmet Foods is a perfect example of a company that utilized the Cultivator program to its full potential. By leaning into the assessment, engaging with mentors, and instituting change, Sam, his team, and company grew and came out stronger together."*

- Sue Hanson, Maine Center for Entrepreneurs

## SUPPORTING MAINE FOOD AND BEVERAGE BY STAGE AND NEED



**Top Gun:** A 15-week training and mentoring program for start-up, early-stage food and beverage companies with Gulf of Maine Research Institute and Maine Aquaculture Association.



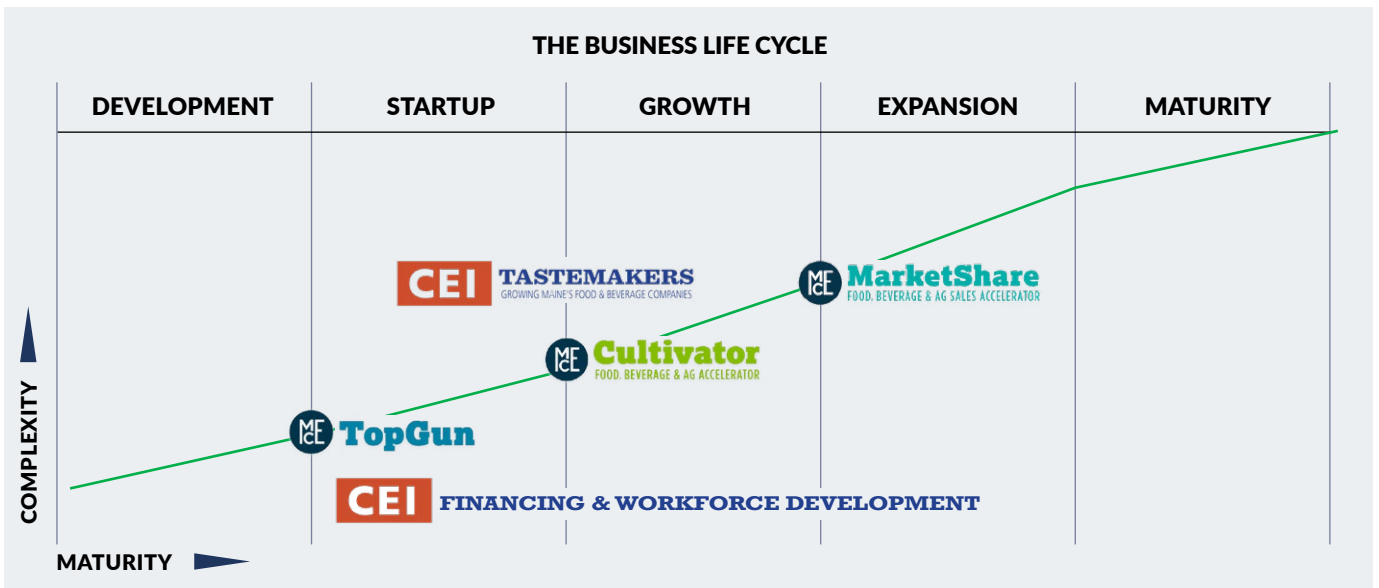
**Cultivator:** A 12-month hands-on program that provides established food and beverage companies with the tools and resources they need to successfully scale their business to the next level.



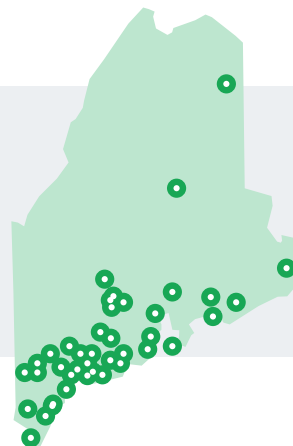
**Tastemakers:** Financial resources, consulting and investor networking opportunities to help established food and beverage companies expand and improve production.



**MarketShare:** An annual subscription program that prepares more mature food and beverage companies to successfully navigate regional and national sales expansion.



FocusMaine is supporting business growth across the state.



## PEMBERTON'S GOURMET FOODS: A TEAM APPROACH THAT'S STRONGER THAN EVER

For many Mainers who dream of bringing their original, artisanal food recipes to market, Chef Sam Mangino may be their new best friend.



For the past 20 years, Pemberton's Gourmet Foods has played a critical role in the growth of specialty food companies that aspire to scale their distribution to larger markets. The business offers private label products, custom processing, small batch food packing, and a suite of associated product development services for food entrepreneurs, in addition to their own line of retail products.

Pemberton's Gourmet Foods enrolled in the FocusMaine-supported Cultivator program managed by the Maine Center for Entrepreneurs in January 2020.

**"The program's mentors assessed our company, set goals for our team, and helped us hold ourselves accountable to reach peak performance and double-digit sales growth. We now have work booked into the first quarter of 2021 and beyond,"** shared Chef Mangino.

## NORTH SPORE: CULTIVATING A NEW INDUSTRY

Morels, porcini, and chanterelles—though many are familiar with the names of these famous mushrooms, few are aware that the future of mycology is being defined in Maine at North Spore.

In 2014, three College of the Atlantic friends set out to turn their passion for mushroom foraging into a mission to make "all things fungi" more accessible to the public. Six years later, they now lead a rapidly growing production business with 29 employees. North Spore provides education and products for the entire spectrum of mycology, from sales of spores to finished wellness products, serving as the hub of Maine's networked cluster of mushroom-focused companies.

North Spore first encountered FocusMaine's programs in 2018 when it enrolled in MCE's Cultivator program for a management tune-up on the business. In 2019, North Spore engaged with CEI's Tastemaker program.

**"The business development tools offered by FocusMaine's partners were supportive, simple, and streamlined to get the right resources to us at the right time,"** shares Eliah Thanhauser, Co-founder and CEO of North Spore.

*"I'm happy to be living in Maine. In my country, we do not do mushroom production. I am very proud to be involved with a company that continues to grow. North Spore is a great work environment and I have learned so much through this experience."*  
Santos Rodimiro Chirinos Martinez, North Spore Packaging and Quality Control department.





Maine is viewed as the future home of land-based aquaculture and already hosts innovative oyster, kelp, mussel and salmon businesses in its coastal communities. These forward-looking investments and Maine’s cold, clean waters and rich heritage of sea-based livelihoods are helping to meet the growing global demand for seafood protein and guiding the state toward a new, sustainable, and exciting future.

**What we do:** FocusMaine seeks to clear a pathway for sustainable growth of Maine’s aquaculture industry. Our partners provide tools for production planning, risk management, business resource access, workforce development, and community engagement. Together, we help Maine’s sea farmers and innovators all along the coast responsibly meet the growing demand while building upon the state’s reputation for high-quality, and sustainably raised delicious food.

**Our Partners:** Gulf of Maine Research Institute, Maine Aquaculture Association, and Maine & Co.

### THREE-YEAR RESULTS:

- Provided 16 start-up aquaculture companies with mentoring and business training through a collaboratively developed, aquaculture-specific business accelerator program.
- Created the first comprehensive aquaculture workforce development strategy to develop training solutions for existing career opportunities and anticipate future needs as the sector responds to global trends.
- Launched [MaineAquaculturist.org](http://MaineAquaculturist.org), a one-stop resource hub for growing aquaculture businesses.
- Developed seven industry-informed, expert-verified financial modeling tools to guide shellfish and kelp growers on a path to profitability. In the last three months of 2020 alone, 17 companies have benefited from these tools.
- Lowered the risk of starting, growing, and investing in aquaculture businesses by expanding crop insurance options, educating growers about risk management, and addressing critical needs in the financing community for benchmarking data.
- Built a pipeline of more than 80 international companies interested in exploring opportunities to expand in Maine.
- Created 70 jobs in the sector and laid the groundwork for longer-term sector growth.



*"Before the [MaineAquaculturist.org](http://MaineAquaculturist.org) website was built, entrepreneurs had to piece together the information they needed to launch their businesses. We knew we could simplify this process while also providing important information about the sector. With FocusMaine's support, GMRI created a "one-stop-shop." It's already getting great traction and supporting informed growth in the sector."*

Chris Vonderweidt, Aquaculture Program Manager, Gulf of Maine Research Institute

## BANGS ISLAND MUSSELS: GROWING A SECTOR AND BUILDING CAREERS

Bangs Island Mussels is an ocean farm in Casco Bay run by father and son Gary and Matt Moretti, who purchased the business in 2010. It is now one of the largest rope-grown mussel farms—and one of the only multi-trophic (layered species) farms—in the United States.

The Morettis have participated in all of FocusMaine's supported programs: Top Gun, Cultivator, Tastemaker and Market Share.

"Our involvement with these valuable business development programs has been an eye-opening experience and helped me to develop strategies for the multiple goals we have in our vision: profitability, environmental sustainability and being a great employer," shares Matt. **"In 2020, we were able to offer benefits to our employees, which has been a 10-year goal. By increasing our scale of operations we are not only able to provide a job, but facilitate a career in Maine."**



*"Many sea farmers have told me that Maine Aquaculture Association's tools are exactly what they need to build a sustainable business model. They're excited to put them to work and to begin a long-term plan for their farms. This is how we'll make meaningful growth in the aquaculture sector, which is just what we intended."*

- Christian Brayden, Project Manager, Maine Aquaculture Association

## THE SEAFOOD ECONOMIC ACCELERATOR FOR MAINE



SEAMaine is an industry-led initiative bringing together leaders in Maine's commercial fishing, aquaculture, and seafood economy. FocusMaine, along with the Maine Technology Institute and many other organizations, provided matching funds that leveraged another \$2 million in federal funding. Seeded by the University of Maine, this statewide effort is developing a roadmap and action plan to diversify opportunities across the marine economy. We are working together to build a plan that responsibly sustains our heritage, supports the growth of good jobs, builds sector resilience, and fosters innovation to keep Maine at the forefront of this globally competitive sector.





# Biopharma

Boston is a well-known global leader in the life sciences sector. As companies look beyond the city to expand or relocate their manufacturing facilities, Maine is well positioned to become “Cambridge North” given its proximity, affordable real estate and lower cost of living. This builds on Maine’s already world-class reputation in the field of veterinary science.

**What we do:** FocusMaine works with partners to attract more companies that believe, as we do, that Maine has what they need to succeed. Guided by a powerful advisory team, we focus our efforts on workforce needs, incentives, and marketing to help businesses find a new home and expand the availability of good jobs within the state.

**Our Partners:** Avigo Solutions and Bioscience Association of Maine and Maine & Co.

## THREE-YEAR RESULTS:

- Grew the roster of companies interested in exploring relocation to Maine, including 40+ companies in active exploration.
- Launched Why Maine, a campaign to strengthen messaging around the robust bioscience industry and the many reasons why Maine is the right choice for businesses considering expansion or relocation into the state.
- Informed our approach with a comprehensive 10-year feasibility study for building the life sciences sector in Maine.
- Created a 12-person expert advisory group drawn from the biosciences research, and education fields to help match Maine’s advantages with evolving national sector needs.
- Joined forces with like-minded organizations that are working to grow Maine’s biosciences workforce and industry, such as the Biosciences Industry of Maine, Roux Institute at Northeastern University, and an EDA-funded Maine Bioscience Cluster project led by MCE.
- Partnered with state, business, and education leadership to introduce biopharma CEOs and C-suite leaders to opportunities in Maine.

## A PARTNERSHIP WITH THE ROUX INSTITUTE AT NORTHEASTERN

The launch of the Roux Institute at Northeastern University in Portland in early 2020 marked the start of a promising new chapter in Maine. The Roux Institute shares FocusMaine's belief that the state is better positioned than ever to unleash new jobs across the life sciences that will produce and attract new opportunities. The two organizations have formalized a partnership focused on workforce development, joint programming and advocacy, and targeted business relocation support.

FocusMaine is proud to be working alongside the Roux Institute as it educates a new generation of world-class talent. This alliance is emblematic of our work with a growing network of higher education partners and nonprofits committed to cultivating a STEM-savvy workforce in Maine that will serve to expand access, discovery, and impact relative to the region's life sciences ecosystem. We will support these learners throughout their journey, ensuring access to opportunities that allow them to build professional and personal foundations in Maine, now and in the future.



***"We are excited to be a partner with FocusMaine. The 'Why Maine' effort was the impetus to build the message and materials that we needed to introduce Maine as a premier location for bioscience, biotech, and biopharma development. I'm certain we will continue to see the momentum building for future growth."***

Agnieszka Carpenter, BioME



Dr. Deborah Bronk, President and CEO of Bigelow Laboratory of Ocean Sciences, was featured in the "Why Maine" video.

# Skills & Talent



Our sector strategies—and the broader Maine economy—must be powered by a talented and diverse workforce. FocusMaine builds statewide partnerships with employers and many of Maine’s colleges and universities on the frontlines of career development and training. We know it is one of the best ways to attract more people to Maine and to keep our graduates close to home.

**What we do:** FocusMaine supports efforts that strengthen skills and build an affinity for Maine among people entering the workforce. From internships to apprenticeships, our efforts are designed to meet the needs for new skills in the state while offering dynamic job opportunities within our most competitive sectors.

**Our Partners:** EducateMaine and Live+Work in Maine.

## THREE-YEAR RESULTS

- Engaged over 1,600 future job seekers and 80 employers in an internship program designed to strengthen the connection with Maine employers and the state.
- Expanded the program to reach businesses in Augusta, Bangor, and communities along the Midcoast.
- Piloted a micro credential program during the pandemic that awarded 89 digital badges.
- Designed an Inclusion and Diversity training to introduce interns to the fundamentals of cultural consciousness, ally skills, and global fluency.
- Piloted an attraction strategy through LinkedIn to introduce people with a connection to Maine to opportunities in the state.
- Strengthened a recruitment platform that highlighted opportunities in FocusMaine’s signature sectors.



*“There is so much data now on the role that experiential learning plays on the path to a great career. We also know that everything that makes Maine distinct—from its natural beauty to its heritage industries—is a selling point for new talent. We’ve combined the two—job opportunities and a great Maine experience—and the results are amazing.” -*

Kate Howell, Program Director, EducateMaine

## THE TRANSFORMATIONAL POWER OF AN INTERNSHIP

### Lillian Lema: Internal Communications Intern, Hannaford Supermarkets



Lillian Lema moved to Maine when she was 12. “My identity was very unusual in Maine at the time,” shares Lillian. “I’m not just Hispanic, I’m Indigenous and of Inca descent.” This is why she was especially delighted to secure an internship at Hannaford

Supermarkets that would allow her to elevate the voices and stories of people who, like her, have a different life experience. As part of her internship, she honed her storytelling skills, working on diversity, inclusion, and engagement, showcasing members of the Hannaford team, and preparing materials for Hispanic Heritage Month.

Newly employed at WGME in Portland, this first-generation college student explained the key building block behind her success: “If you’re looking to grow and learn as an individual, definitely take on any internship you can get your hands on,” she said.

### Sam Bengs: Research Intern, GMRI



Sam Bengs moved to Maine from Minnesota in 2019, drawn here by her grandmother’s Nova Scotian roots and her dream of pursuing marine sciences as a career. She promptly enrolled in the Southern Maine Community College’s

marine sciences program and found a job working on Portland’s waterfront.

A summer internship at Gulf of Maine Research Institute (GMRI) enabled Sam to complete research for her college capstone project using eDNA to understand the biomass and abundance of herring in the Gulf of Maine. About the internship experience, Sam says that she “can’t even imagine a better catalyst for my learning and my preparation for the career I want to have.”

“Maine people have been so welcoming. The opportunities here are wide open, but we need to have the invitation,” shares Sam. “If employers can identify the talent they want and advertise that to students in Maine looking for work experience, there’s a great opportunity to create success for the intern, the employer—and Maine as a whole.”



*“We’re extremely thankful to have a partner that is as enthusiastic as we are about the enormous opportunities for attracting and retaining talented people in our state. FocusMaine’s support has been an important part of our success in positioning Maine as a world-class career destination.”*

Nate Wildes, Executive Director, and Katie Shorey, Director of Engagement, Live+Work In Maine

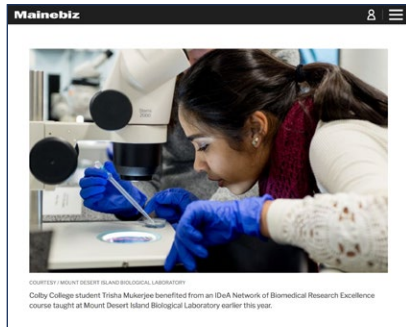
# BUILDING MOMENTUM

Each new job in FocusMaine’s signature sectors creates, on average, an additional 1.6 new jobs in the local economy. These quality jobs tend to be full-time, offer benefits, and pay higher wages.

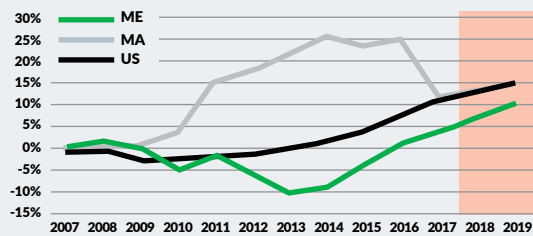
Our partners report on the number of jobs created by companies participating in FocusMaine-supported programs. To these metrics, we apply multipliers to account for indirect and induced job creation that results from

spending on supply chain businesses and local consumption markets.

In addition, our analysis of data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages over the past three years shows promising growth trends in our three sectors. We remain confident in the fundamentals of our strategy to grow jobs.

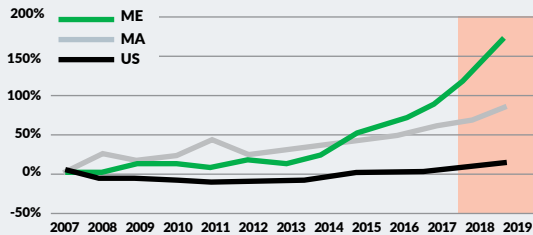


**Food & Beverage Manufacturing: Change in Employment, 2007-2019**

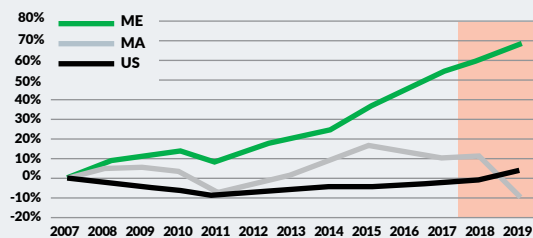


Years FocusMaine programs have been active.

**Aquaculture: Change in Employment, 2007-2019**



**Biopharma Manufacturing: Change in Employment, 2007-2019**



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Maine Public Radio  
Here and Now

**Maine's Biological Science Industry Touts Growth Over Past 5 Years**  
 By PATTY WIGHT • OCT 17, 2019

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*“FocusMaine is a special example of outstanding teamwork and a project we couldn’t resist funding. We originally invested in FocusMaine because we were convinced that its approach was strategic, visionary, and novel and that its thought and operational leadership was top-notch. We’re delighted to invest in FocusMaine again because its approach to job creation works and is needed now more than ever to help power Maine’s economic recovery.”*

- Greg Powell, Executive Chairman, Harold Alfond™ Foundation

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## **AN EXTRAORDINARY GIFT TO MEET AN EXTRAORDINARY CHALLENGE**



In 2020, the Harold Alfond™ Foundation renewed its programmatic support to FocusMaine for another three years. This \$5.18M investment comes at a critical time for the people of Maine as we begin to repair the damage inflicted by the pandemic.

### **It also comes at a time of tremendous opportunity.**

The great shifts that informed our jobs strategy have endured—including increased consumer demand for healthier, locally sourced foods, diminishing sources of sea protein, the return of pharmaceutical manufacturing to the U.S., and a growing interest in living in Maine while working anywhere in the world.

### **The pandemic has underscored just how well positioned Maine is to rebound.**

We believe our sectors hold the key to longer-term resilience and prosperity for the families and communities of Maine. Despite the headwinds facing the economy, it is the passionate, hard-working, persistent, and innovative entrepreneurs driving our growth who give us reason to believe that we are on the right track.

This significant gift from the Harold Alfond™ Foundation will again help us to support partners who share our vision for job growth and sustain our collective efforts to grow good job opportunities across the state at a time when they are needed most.

## OUR LEADERSHIP TEAM

The work of FocusMaine is guided by dedicated leaders who help us deliver on our promise. FocusMaine's work is better because of their experience, insights, and commitment to our mission.

### **Michael Dubyak**

Co-Chair, FocusMaine  
Former CEO and Chairman, WEX, Inc.

### **Andrea Cianchette Maker**

Co-Chair, FocusMaine  
Partner, Pierce Atwood LLP

### **Michael Bourque**

President and CEO, MEMIC

### **Jay Dearborn**

President Corporate Payments,  
WEX, Inc.

### **Dr. John Fitzsimmons**

President Emeritus, Maine Community  
College System

### **Clifton Greim**

President, Frosty Hill Consulting

### **Kimberly Hamilton, PhD**

President, FocusMaine

### **Charles E. Hewett, PhD**

Founding Executive Director, IDEALS

### **Raymond T. "Chip" Kelley**

Maine Market President, KeyBank

### **Ed McKersie**

Founder and President, ProSearch, Inc.

### **ADVISORY TEAM CHAIRS**

#### **Dana Connors**

President Maine State Chamber of  
Commerce, Business Associations  
Advisory Team Chair

#### **Dr. Joan Ferrini-Mundy**

President, University of Maine  
Academic Advisory Committee Chair

#### **Chuck Lawton**

Formerly with Planning Decisions  
Research Advisory Committee Chair

### **EXECUTIVE ADVISORY GROUP**

#### **Eleanor Baker**

Co-founder, Baker Newman Noyes

#### **Karen Mills**

Senior Fellow, Harvard Business  
School and Former Administrator, SBA

#### **Robert Moore**

Former CEO & Chairman, Dead River  
Company

#### **William Ryan, Sr.**

Former Chairman & CEO,  
TD Banknorth Inc.

#### **David Shaw**

Founder & Former CEO, IDEXX  
Laboratories

## FOCUSMAINE'S SUPPORTERS

FocusMaine's work is supported by generous donors who share our vision for Maine. We thank them immensely for their support.

Our cornerstone funder, the Harold Alfond™ Foundation, deserves special recognition for its ongoing commitment to advance FocusMaine's vision.

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At FocusMaine, we're committed to creating quality jobs in Maine's globally competitive and dynamic sectors.

We collaborate with a network of extraordinary partners to transform Maine's talent and assets into opportunity and prosperity for Maine's families.

By helping businesses grow and succeed, we turn jobs into careers, sustain communities, and strengthen Maine's reputation as a first-rate place to live and work.

It's all part of our vision to see Maine thrive.

**Contact Information**

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We invite you to support Maine's recovery with a contribution to FocusMaine. Thanks to the generous support of the Harold Alfond™ Foundation, every dollar contributed will be matched by an additional four dollars to secure the future for Maine's families.

Photo credits: Bangs Island Mussels, Biosciences Association of Maine, Coastal Enterprises, Inc., Educate Maine, Island Institute, Kim Hamilton, Live + Work in Maine, Maine Aquaculture Association, Maine Center for Entrepreneurs, North Spore, O'Maine Studios, Pemberton's Gourmet Foods.