

The Magazine of the Maine Better Transportation Association

MAINE TRAILS



MEET THE 32

2021 scholarship recipients

'FORTUNATE'

UMaine's Dean Dana Humphrey



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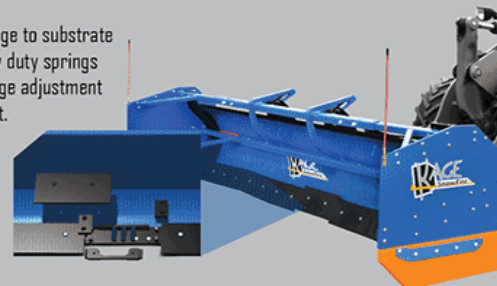
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The Magazine of the Maine Better Transportation Association

MAINE TRAILS

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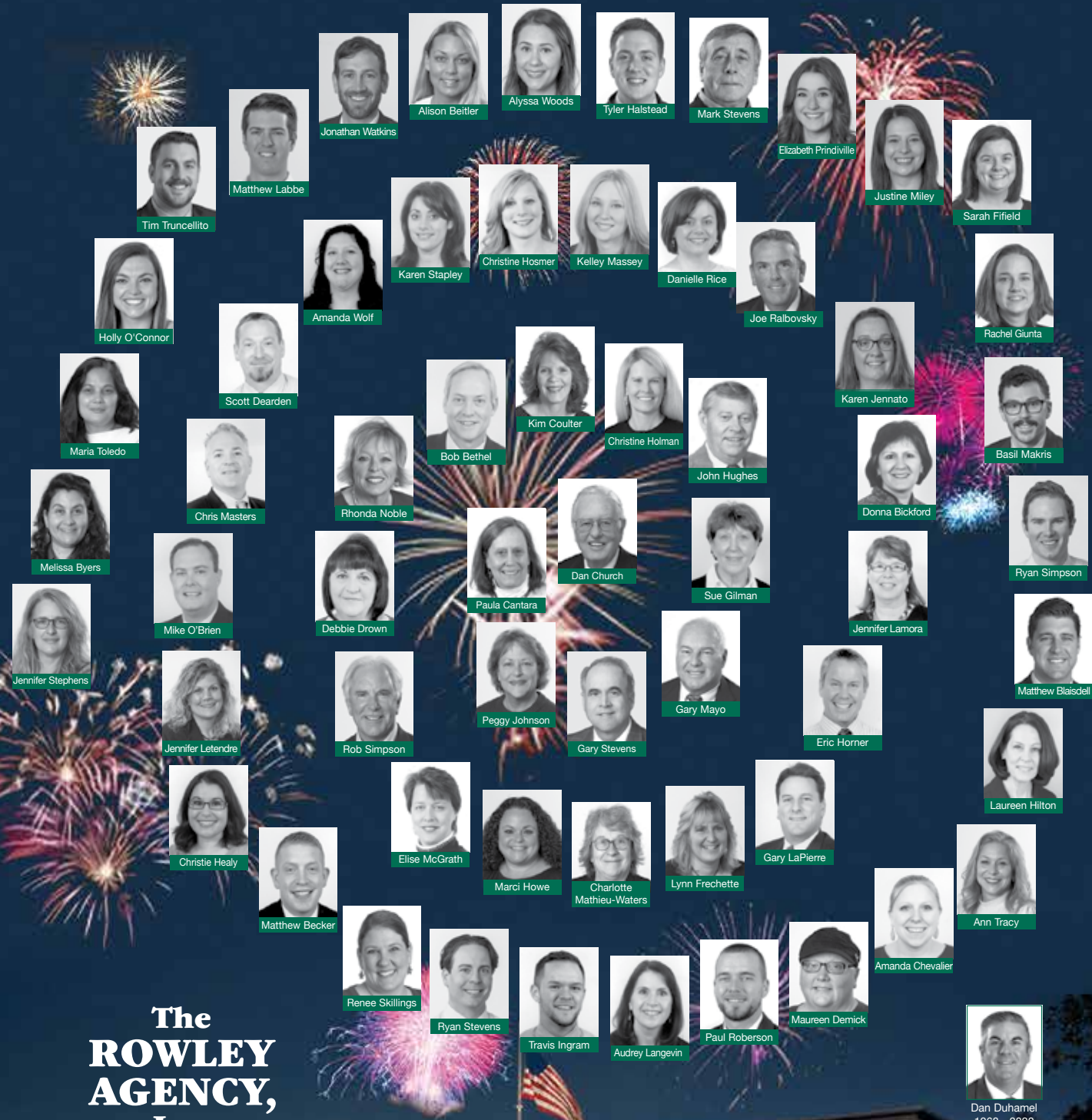
On the cover: MBTA's 2021 scholarship recipients.



Maine Better Transportation Association

146 State Street ■ Augusta, Maine 04330 ■ (207) 622-0526 ■ FAX (207) 623-2928 ■ www.mbtaonline.org
"Maine Trails" (ISSN-0047-5548 8) is published bi-monthly, for \$20 by the Maine Better Transportation Association, 146 State Street, Augusta, ME 04330. Periodicals postage paid at Augusta, Maine. Printed by J.S. McCarthy, Augusta, Maine. Postmaster: Send address change to: Maine Trails ■ 146 State Street, Augusta, ME 04330

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Irvin Smith, MBTA President



Signs of strength and growth

As we lean into the New Year, we have lots to be thankful for at MBTA.

First, there is the new funding from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). It is coming just in time to help Maine cope with myriad issues facing our transportation system. These include rising materials and labor costs, the need to expand our EV charging network, and a need to start to make fundamental changes to upgrade our system while addressing climate change. We know we're going to be receiving 25 percent more in federal transportation funding at least in the first year of the five-year reauthorization – and that will be a great help as we work to preserve and improve our transportation system.

We need to be thankful for our Congressional delegation – in particular Senator Susan Collins, who was one of a bipartisan group of ten who were original drafters of the bipartisan bill.

We also are fortunate to have a dedicated and engaged MBTA board of directors and executive committee who have helped keep this organization on an even keel during the pandemic.

Personally, I want to say thanks to our top-notch MBTA staff, who have helped us stay flexible, made our meetings fun and interesting, even when we've had to go online, and kept us all in touch throughout this on-again-off-again second year of Covid.

We also are so lucky to have a long list of generous members who have sponsored events on the MBTA calendar – both virtual and live. Despite the pandemic, we had a pretty full schedule of meetings this year – from the virtual Cumberland County Meeting last March and our Aroostook County meeting in Presque Isle – our first live meeting in more than a year – to a live Transportation on Tap gathering in Portland this summer, the 25th Annual Infrastructure Golf Classic, the MBTA Fall Convention & Golf Tournament, and most recently the virtual Maine Transportation Gathering and the live MBTA Holiday Meeting.

“We also can be thankful for signs of growth – in the field of transportation and in our membership. I want to send a shout out to the MBTA Membership Committee who really outdid themselves this year. Thanks to the dedicated group of individuals on the committee – and particularly to the committee’s exceptional chair Glenn Adams (who won the campaign convincingly again this year), we now have 34 new corporate members and one new educational institution as a member and 15 new individual and student members.”

Your support for these events expands our very important mission of advocating for state and federal investments in a modern and safe transportation system throughout Maine.

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We also can be thankful for signs of growth – in the field of transportation and in our membership. I want to send a shout out to Glenn Adams and the MBTA Membership Committee who really outdid themselves this year. Thanks to the dedicated group of individuals on the committee – and particularly to the committee’s exceptional chair, Glenn Adams (who won the campaign convincingly again this year), we now have 34 new corporate members and one new educational institution as a member. We also have 15 new individual and student members. That’s right. It’s a record for the MBTA and will help us to continue to expand our reach throughout the industry and across the state.

We are also thankful for the 32 scholarship recipients, all of them smart as a whip and aiming for careers in transportation and business. They remind us, as only the young can, that our industry is flourishing and has a bright future.

We are so lucky to be able to show our support for these future business and community leaders. It was great to meet many of them at the MBTA Holiday Meeting on December 9. They come from different backgrounds

and bring different perspectives to transportation. We look forward to working alongside them in the future to make transportation safer and more efficient in Maine and elsewhere.

In the end, our activity signals that MBTA continues to be a healthy organization with a laser focus on its mission - to be a nonpartisan voice advocating for investment in a safe, efficient transportation network. That’s a mission we have been dedicated to since 1939 and it remains relevant today.

Good transportation is essential to the health of Maine communities and to its economy. That is just as true today as it was 82 years ago.

I am proud to be serving as president of this organization and of its members that do so much good work for Maine. And I look forward to seeing you all in the New Year.

We have lots in store for the next 12 months – including, we hope, the restarting of our Young Professionals’ Transportation on Tap meetings. I hope you watch your e-mail, MBTAonline.org and MBTA on Instagram and Facebook for the latest. ■

MBTA CALENDAR

Thursday, March 10

CUMBERLAND COUNTY MEETING
Portland Sheraton, South Portland
5 p.m.

Thursday, May 12

ANNUAL MEETING
Hilton Garden Inn, Freeport
5 p.m.

Thursday, July 14

INFRASTRUCTURE GOLF TOURNAMENT
Waterville Country Club, Oakland
9 a.m.

Thursday, August 4

AROOSTOOK COUNTY MEETING
Location TBD
5 p.m.

Friday, September 16

FALL CONVENTION/OUTING
Samoset Resort, Rockport

Saturday, September 17

FALL GOLF
Samoset Resort, Rockport

Friday, October 7

PDH TOUR
Location and Time TBD

Thursday, December 1

MAINE TRANSPORTATION CONFERENCE
Augusta Civic Center

Thursday, December 8

HOLIDAY-SCHOLARSHIP MEETING
Black Bear Inn, Orono
5 p.m.

For the latest information
about MBTA events, go to the Events tab
at MBTAonline.org

USPS Statement of Ownership, Management and Circulation

Publication Title:	Maine Trails	
Publication Number:	063-670.	
Issue Frequency:	Bimonthly.	
Complete Mailing Address:	146 State Street, Augusta, ME 04330.	
Publisher:	Maine Better Transportation Association.	
Total No. Copies	1100	1100
Outside County Mail Subs	563	590
In-County Subscriptions	62	64
Sales through Dealers, etc.	0	0
Other Classes	0	0
Total Paid and/or Requested Circulation	625	654
Outside County	235	237
In-County	32	31
Mailed at other classes	0	0
Total Free Distribution	267	268
Total Distribution	892	922
Copies Not Distributed	208	178
Total	1100	1100
Percent Paid and/or Requested Circ.	70	71



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ONRAMP

Bridging the gap

THE PENNSYLVANIA Turnpike soon will install overhead tolling gantries on nine bridges that the state department of transportation is considering tolling. The work will be part of the turnpike's \$125 million project to install open-road tolling to replace the former toll booths along its 450-mile system.

The possibility of PennDOT adding tolls to bridges to raise money for their replacement is still under consideration, but the agency is finalizing an agreement with the turnpike to collect tolls.

The gantries are expected to record payments of \$1 to \$2 from motorists each time they use the bridges if they have an E-ZPass transponder. If motorists don't have a transponder, a license plate photo will be taken and a bill sent to the owner by mail. The turnpike will turn the receipts

over to PennDOT, which will reimburse the turnpike for the cost of the gantries, collection equipment, customer service and any other staff cost, but the agency won't make any money on the deal. PennDOT is in the process of making its case with federal officials to allow tolling on the bridges.

The agency wants to turn over operation of the bridges for 30 years to a private company that would use toll funds for replacement and maintenance.

PennDOT says it receives about \$6.9 billion for road work annually, less than half of the \$15 billion it says it should be spending. Additional money the state will receive under the federal infrastructure bill wouldn't be enough to fix the shortfall, it says. ■



A toll gantry on the Pennsylvania Turnpike.

OTTO YAMAMOTO - WIKIMEDIA

Let it snow (but not too much)

THIS WINTER, many states are having trouble finding enough snowplow drivers to take the comparatively low-paying job that requires a commercial driver's license and often entails working irregular hours in dangerous conditions, according to the Associated Press.

"We want the traveling public to understand why it could take longer this season to clear highways during winter storms," said Jon Swartz, the maintenance administrator for the Montana Department of Transportation, which is short about 90 drivers. "Knowing this helps motorists

to plan ahead and adjust or even delay travel plans."

State transportation departments say there are several reasons for a lack of snowplow drivers: the record low unemployment rate, an aging workforce and an increased demand for diesel mechanics and CDL drivers in other industries. Private companies can also be more nimble — raising salaries and offering bonuses to drivers — than state agencies, which often have to get legislative approval to change salaries.

The American Trucking Associations estimates there will be a record shortage

of just over 80,000 truck drivers this year, and that doesn't include the shortfall in drivers for school buses, public transportation or snowplows.

Even if states are able to hire drivers with commercial licenses, those drivers still need to be trained to run a snowplow and load the truck with salt and sand before learning a route. "When you're plowing the road you need to know where the bridge abutment is and where the expansion joints are so you don't hook that with a plow," said Barbara LaBoe, spokesperson for Washington state's Department of Transportation. ■



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Meet the 32

MBTA awards 32 scholarships in 2021 to Maine students pursuing transportation studies

CONGRATULATIONS TO MBTA's 2021 scholarship winners – 32 talented, smart and hard-working students, most of whom are pursuing transportation-related studies at schools in Maine and New England.

This year, the MBTA Educational Foundation awarded \$42,500 in scholarships to 32 students who promise to bring a wide range of experience and insight to transportation and business in the state. Some discovered their interest in transportation while growing up here in Maine. Others learned about the importance of transportation while still young children in other countries. Included in this impressive group are four "Transportation Trailblazers" – Kaleb Barrett, Tyler Field, Joshua Reed and Parastoo "Parry" Seddiqi – individuals who already have shown leadership and vision in their studies and work in the community. There also are several recipients of special named scholarships – the Millard Pray, Kenneth Burrill, Frank Healy and Timothy M. Folster scholarships – grants awarded to promising students in recognition of the many contributions these individuals have made to the MBTA and Maine's transportation system.

One of the most important events of the MBTA calendar is the annual Holiday-Scholarship Meeting in Orono. This year, MBTA members got the chance to meet many of these outstanding young students at that event on December 9 and welcome them to Maine's transportation community.

The MBTA looks forward to hearing from these outstanding students – and working with them – in the future! And many thanks to our members' generosity that made these scholarships possible.

Lara Almamouri University of Maine

Lara is a third-year civil engineering student at the University of Maine. Growing up in Portland, Lara always knew she wanted to pursue a career in civil engineering because of her love for math and science, and her desire to use those skills to solve everyday problems. After taking a course in transportation engineering, Lara knew that she wanted to grow her experience in the field and continue to pursue transportation as a career. Lara wants to pursue a career in transportation because it affects every one of us on a daily basis. After graduation, Lara hopes to find a career in southern Maine, so she can be part of a team that contributes to solving problems in transportation and make it safe for everyone by planning, designing roadways, or modifying existing roadways. As an engineer, Lara's goal will always be to make safety a priority and make improvements that minimize the accidents that occur daily all around the United States. Moreover, Lara knows that there are many transportation areas in which everyone can find their area of interest and looks forward to growing and gaining experience in a field she loves.



Vanessa Bambe Southern Maine Community College

Born and raised in Rwanda, Vanessa Bambe is a second-year student at Southern Maine Community College. She grew up in a small village in Rwanda, where it was hard for her to major in engineering. She followed her desire to pursue higher education in the US, and is pursuing a degree in civil engineering

Vanessa Bambe

with the goal of becoming a transportation engineer. Her next step is to earn a bachelor's degree, followed by a master's and PhD, all at the University of Maine. What inspired her dream was the lack of well-built transportation infrastructure in her own country, and her goal is to improve transportation in Rwanda. After graduation, she hopes to work at Sebago Technics in Maine. The work experience will improve her skills and knowledge in the transportation field. She then hopes to return to Rwanda to apply the knowledge she will have learned. A class that she has really enjoyed lately is Introduction to Differential Equations, as it varies from any other classes she has taken and the concepts are new to her. She enjoys the challenge of learning something completely new and is amazed whenever she gets it right. She likes the sense of accomplishment that comes with the class and learning new things.



Kaleb Barrett University of Maine

Transportation Trailblazer

Kaleb Barrett

Kaleb Barrett attended Freeport High School where he was a three-season athlete and discovered a passion for engineering. He is currently in his third year at the University of Maine, majoring in construction engineering with a minor in business management. Kaleb completed an internship with CPM Constructors in the past, working on the Jonesport-Beals Bridge. Most recently, he had the opportunity to intern with Cianbro, being part of a team working on the North Hero-Grand Isle Drawbridge in Vermont. He learned a great deal about the industry and gained experience in quantity take offs, surveying, safety and quality assurance. Kaleb would like to continue building on his knowledge to prepare him for a career in the transportation field. His soil mechanics class is of particular interest

this semester, as it allows him to collaborate with peers and problem solve. The lab has provided a foundation in geotechnical engineering, which is important to the construction field. With the combination of his construction engineering academics and business management skills, he is hoping to own and operate a Maine-based construction business one day. In his spare time, he enjoys playing on the UMaine club soccer team, fishing and golf.



Gilbert Basabinka

**Gilbert Basabinka
University of Maine**

Gilbert Basabinka is a civil engineering student in his senior year at the University of Maine. He grew up in Kigali, Rwanda, before moving to the United States in 2017. His upbringing in a community in Rwanda that lacked basic infrastructure moved him to become someone who could solve a major challenge his town faced, specifically the lack of infrastructure.

As a child, Gilbert attended an elementary school on the other side of a small river. Students had to stay home from school when it rained, since the little stream could overflow and destroy the two pieces of wood spanning it. If the “bridge” failed, students could not cross it to return home, so they had to miss school. As he grew up, he envisioned civil engineering as a perfect path to accomplish his childhood dream of developing safe infrastructure for communities.

Last summer, Gilbert interned in a geotechnical consulting firm where many of his tasks were bridge and road projects. In his final undergraduate year, his dream to help build safe communities is within reach. He is hoping to land a job upon graduation and live his childhood goal of helping his current community, in Maine, where he currently resides. Gilbert aims to use the skills and knowledge he is gaining from UMaine to solve transportation and mobility difficulties facing communities across the state.



Lucas Bentley

**Lucas Bentley
University of Maine**

Lucas Bentley grew up in Gardiner, where he graduated from high school in 2019 and then enrolled in the civil engineering program at the University of Maine. Halfway through his third year, Lucas plans to spend his remaining time double concentrating in transportation and the structural aspects of the civil engineering degree, before graduating in May 2023.

This year Lucas is serving as vice president of the UMaine Steel Bridge Team, which builds a scale model steel bridge every year. He looks forward to the competition in the spring with other schools in the northeast, which has multiple sectors including best design and building speed. The past two summers Lucas worked in the transportation field in the quality control division of Pike Industries. This summer, he plans to move into a design firm to get some real-world experience in an engineering consultant firm. Lucas is very thankful to the Maine Better Transportation Association Educational Foundation and members for their generosity as this is the second consecutive year that Lucas has received an award. The scholarship will go to the cost of tuition to help pay for his education.



Kenneth Burrill Scholarship



Tanner Castellano

**Tanner Castellano
Southern Maine
Community College**

Tanner Castellano grew up in Camden, and has loved all aspects of transportation their entire life. This passion started out when they were young with a love of trains and frequent visits to the Owls Head Transportation Museum. Tanner’s grandfather was a gearhead as well and would take them for rides in his Alfa Romeo. In middle school, Tanner’s focus shifted towards cars. Every day they would spend time researching cars, how they work, and the engineering behind them. Sadly, their grandfather passed away too soon, but the loss fueled Tanner’s love of cars. After high school, Tanner continued their education at Southern Maine Community College as an automotive technology major. They finally had the opportunity to really start wrenching on some cars. In the summer between their first and second year at SMCC, Tanner had the amazing opportunity to work as an intern at Owls Head Transportation Museum, a place they had visited numerous times before. They had the opportunity to maintain, work on, and help restore several antique automobiles. Now Tanner is in their final year at SMCC with just one semester to go. With a job already lined up, they will work at Firefly Restorations, a business that restores antique fire engines. Tanner is excited about their future and what cars it may bring!



Logan Doucette

**Logan Doucette
University of Maine**

Logan grew up in Bradley, and he can usually be found either enjoying the outdoors or doing engineering work. Logan’s interest in engineering and the transportation industry was sparked at an early age when he discovered the challenges the industry presents and the complexity of those issues. Logan is studying construction engineering technology at the University of Maine and is also pursuing a minor in business administration. Beyond his education, Logan is also getting practical experience by working as an engineering intern at UMaine. Through his work, he has gained knowledge and practice of important skills that he plans to capitalize on after graduation. Throughout his time as an engineering intern, Logan has worked on a multitude of different transportation projects including roadway and parking lot rehabilitation projects. Logan thrives on the challenges that the transportation industry presents and hopes to use his engineering background to make a difference. When considering his future, Logan would love to acquire a job in Maine; however, he also wants to see the world, so he is open to relocation. Either way, Logan wants to land in a challenging, yet responsible position where he can use his work ethic and skills to contribute within the transportation industry.

**Timothy Doyle
Western New England University**

Tim Doyle is from West Gardiner and is a junior at Western New England University pursuing a mechanical engineering degree with a minor in finance. Leaving Maine to pursue his education has really opened his



Timothy Doyle

eyes to the disparity of transportation options people have. As we look to the future of transportation, whether that be mass public transit, electric vehicles or even a resurgence of rail he knows that it won’t be easy to explain these options to everyone as population density and economic growth potential vary drastically by region. As an engineer he hopes to be part of the solutions that change the way we move around the world in a safe and sustainable way. He is hoping to pursue an internship this summer with a transportation company and begin his career shortly thereafter. Working on problems that make the world a safer, happier, more efficient place has been a dream of his since he was young. As he continues his education he hopes to begin to make that dream a reality. Due to the generosity of the MBTA in providing the scholarship he can focus on his studies and career prospects as some of the financial pressure of a college education is relieved. Thank you again for this scholarship.



Tyler Field

**Tyler Field
University of Maine**

Tyler Field was born and raised in Hampden. After graduating from Hampden Academy, he enlisted with the Maine Air National Guard (MEANG) as an engineering specialist. He currently serves in a full-time status as a project manager. In this position, he is responsible for designing and managing construction projects of all disciplines at the air base in Bangor. Tyler focuses heavily on repairing base roads and pavements, ensuring transportation needs are met for the 101st Air Refueling Wing. For his efforts, he received the Outstanding Airman of the Year for the State of Maine award in 2020.



Transportation Trailblazer

In addition to his military career, Tyler is enrolled full-time at the University of Maine. There, he studies civil and environmental engineering. After completing this program, he hopes to commission with the MEANG as an engineering officer. By doing so, he aims to continue working in Maine and abroad, fulfilling transportation engineering needs for the military. Living and working in his home state, close to family and friends, is of utmost importance to Tyler. As an individual who enjoys learning why and how things work, Tyler naturally found his calling in the field of transportation engineering. In the future, he hopes to provide the state of Maine with the best professional and quality results possible.

**Samuel Foglio
University of Maine**

Samuel Foglio, from Shapleigh, is a senior in the civil engineering program at the University of Maine, with a concentration in transportation. He is a member of the UMaine Student Chapter of ASCE, and the UMaine Car Club. Sam is pursuing a career in transportation because he wants to help keep Maine’s infrastructure safe and finds it inspiring to see the final product of a job. He has worked three summers as an intern at the Maine Turnpike Authority, where he has seen first-hand what goes on behind the scenes to keep the Turnpike running smoothly. Sam was a student presenter at the



Lucius Barrows Scholarship



Sam Foglio

Virtual Transportation Gathering held last year in lieu of the Maine Transportation Conference, discussing his research on the integration of automated vehicles. He recently was awarded the Rick McCarthy Scholarship by the American Council of Engineering Companies. Rick had a history with MBTA, as he effectively represented the association at the Maine Legislature for several years. Sam is excited and eager to enter the civil engineering industry. After graduation, he hopes to get a position in the transportation design or construction management field in Maine, with plans to obtain his professional engineer license in the future. He enjoys spending time on the lake and mountain biking in the summer, skiing and snowmobiling in the winter, and watching football year-round.



Brenden Goss

**Brenden Goss
University of Maine**

Brenden Goss is a third-year mechanical engineering student at the University of Maine. For his senior transition project at Cape Elizabeth High School, he spent two weeks job shadowing at D&G Machine Products, a manufacturing company in Westbrook. After gaining an introduction to the engineering/manufacturing industry in Maine, Brenden returned to D&G Machine for the following summer and winter breaks working in the shop gaining hands-on experience. Starting out in assembly, Brenden worked on weldment frames to be used in hospitals all over the United States. The following year he worked in the back of the shop geared towards manual machining projects and repairs. After learning the fundamental principles of manual machining, Brenden began completing projects learning how to transfer engineering prints into finished parts. Additionally, Brenden was able to work “road jobs” at Sappi paper mills, hydro dams, and the Poland Springs bottling facility in Hollis. This provided insight to how Maine manufacturing serves an assortment of Maine industries. After college, Brenden would like to pursue a career in manufacturing engineering at D&G Machine Products to continue servicing Maine industries.



Hunter Haley

**Hunter Haley
Eastern Maine
Community College**

Transportation is one of the most important aspects of life, for people all around the world. Today, people can tap a button on their phone and have an item delivered in a matter of 24 hours. Especially these past years, with the pandemic going on, the importance of transportation has been even more obvious. Deliveries and ordering online is the new normal for many people. However, it takes a lot to be able to make those deliveries happen. It takes mechanics to work on the equipment used, along with construction crews and engineers to make sure the paths traveled are safe and efficient. There are so many more moving parts than just a



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finger tapping a phone screen. Choosing transportation as a career was a very easy decision for Hunter, especially the mechanical aspect. He has known since freshman year of high school that he wanted to be a heavy equipment/diesel technician, and he knew he wanted to enroll in the diesel/truck program at Eastern Maine Community College. His passion for transportation began long before that, though, when he would see excavators going by on big heavy haul trucks, and they just looked so beautiful to him. Hunter believes that the hard work it takes to have a career in transportation is the best part.



Sam Honey

Sam Honey University of Maine

Samuel Honey grew up in Orono and graduated from Orono High School. While in school, he worked summers at a local flatwork company (CMI). In 2017 he graduated and was accepted at the University of Maine as a business undeclared major and was later accepted into the surveying engineering technology program.

Frank A. Healy Scholarship

Sam's interest in the transportation field was sparked during his freshman year of college, when he applied for a job at Lane Construction - a place where his grandfather had worked for many years and talked about often. After getting the job, he worked on the bridge crew doing manual labor for two years. Later, he started doing construction survey/GPS work for Eurovia Northeast, which was formerly Lane Construction. Sam has always enjoyed being in an outside work environment as opposed to behind a desk, which is another reason he pursued a transportation career. After graduation he hopes to continue his work at Northeast Paving on the earth crew doing GPS work. He would also like to become more experienced with Trimble products and equipment, which he will be using throughout his career.

In his free time, Sam likes to snowboard, hike, and hang out with his dog Olive, his girlfriend Katelyn, as well as his family and friends.



Sophia Koziell

Sophia Koziell University of New Hampshire

Sophia is a Maine native, growing up on the coast in Scarborough. She is a junior at the University of New Hampshire double majoring in finance and information systems and business analytics. Sophia is very involved in the University of New Hampshire community. Her involvement is mainly in the Peter T. Paul School of Business and Economics. At the business school, she is a member of Women in Business, the Financial Partners program, the Rutman Fellowship, and Rines Angel Fund. She is also a peer advisor for FIRE, a program where she teaches 22 business school freshmen. Sophia truly enjoys being involved in the University of New Hampshire.

Millard Pray Scholarship

Sophia's family has a rich history in the construction and transportation industries, which has been the driving factor as to why she wants to pursue a career in transportation. While she is still deciding what career path she will take, she hopes to combine her business expertise with

transportation. She either sees herself working in a financial department for an organization like the Maine Turnpike Authority or running and working at a construction company like her family has done, specifically her grandfather, uncles, and dad. While Sophia has enjoyed her time in New Hampshire, she looks forward to moving back to Maine post-graduation, where she will hopefully pursue a career in transportation.



John Lanahan

John Lanahan Maine Maritime Academy

John Lanahan is currently a third-year student at Maine Maritime Academy, studying marine engineering technology. He grew up in the south, primarily Florida, where he spent much time on the water, boating and fishing. This is where his passion for the water developed and when he found out about Maine Maritime

Academy from a close family member and recent alumnus. After doing some research, he figured it was a career path that he'd be very interested in. This summer, he was able to take part in the school's training cruise, a 37-day voyage all the way down the east coast and around the Bahamas. When he returned, he took part in a 62-day trip as a cadet aboard the Overseas New York, a coastwise tanker carrying petroleum products from Texas refineries to Florida ports. After graduation, he plans on using his 3rd engineer's unlimited license to work onboard one of the US-flagged vessels currently in operation, potentially with OSG, the company he cadet-shipped with this summer. Overall, he recognizes that transportation is one of the most crucial aspects of our modern society and is vital to the economy. He is very excited to contribute his part come spring 2023!



Katie Luce

Katie Luce University of Maine

Lucius Barrows Scholarship

Katie Luce is a second-year student at the University of Maine, majoring in civil engineering. She grew up in Sidney and first chose the field of engineering based on her strengths in designing, creating, and being a leader. Katie likes trying new things, and had the opportunity to attend multiple engineering camps, as well as participate in job shadows

to learn about future career paths. Now, in her second year at the university, she plans to earn a bachelor of science in civil engineering with a minor in marketing, combining two passions which should lead to a wide range of opportunities. Katie hopes to work in Maine within the transportation and engineering industry, to make infrastructure safer and more efficient, while also integrating her marketing experience. Katie has already participated in two part-time internships through the University of Maine Innovation Center and hopes to get more real-world experience within her field of study in the following years. In her free time, Katie is the co-president of the Sophomore Eagles Honor Society, takes part in music groups and athletic clubs, and focuses on her current internship with UpStart Maine. She would like to recognize and thank the Maine Better Transportation Association for providing these supportive scholarships, and for inviting all scholarship recipients to the Holiday & Scholarship Meeting.



Molly MacInnis Maine Maritime Academy

Molly MacInnis grew up with her parents in Georgetown, Massachusetts and Londonderry, New Hampshire. Molly graduated from Triton Regional High School in 2019. Outside of academics, she began studying the traditional craft of wooden boat building and repair at twelve years old at Lowell's Boat Shop in Amesbury, Massachusetts, sparking her interest in the maritime industry. Molly

Molly MacInnis

continues to have a passion for the building, repairing, and sailing of wooden boats.

Currently, Molly is a junior studying Marine Transportation Operations and minoring in business at Maine Maritime Academy. She is the student second mate aboard the Schooner Bowdoin and is a second-class stryker as a part of the Regiment of Midshipmen at the academy. Aboard Bowdoin, she is a student leader actively involved in terrestrial navigation demonstrations while under sail. She helps with all aspects of rigging and maintenance work as part of working on the waterfront. In her time off from school, Molly works as crew aboard the Schooner Fame in Salem, Massachusetts and the Schooner Ardelle in Gloucester, Massachusetts. She enjoys working with local middle school students and teaching them how to sail. She hopes to become the first person in her family to hold a third mate's unlimited tonnage license. She wants

to pursue jobs in the industry aboard Ro-Ro's, container ships, and/or future offshore wind opportunities in Maine.



Abigail Morrison-Ouellette University of Maine

Millard Pray Scholarship

Abigail Morrison

in civil engineering, along with participating in the Honors College. The civil engineering department is excellent and she likes the environment where the engineering students are encouraged to work together to help each other solve problems. This has helped Abigail realize how important collaboration is in the industry. Abigail is interested in pursuing a career in transportation because she has seen how important reliable roads and bridges are to everyone's daily life. They make it possible for people to do things such as visit family and commute to work and school. Abigail understands the value that these activities bring to the community and economy of Maine and looks forward to working in the industry in Maine in the future. Besides studying at the university, Abigail enjoys reading, doing crafts, hiking, and spending time with her family.



Graça Muzela Washington County Community College

Graça Muzela

Graça Muzela grew up in Angola and moved to the United States in 2019 to pursue his dream of becoming an electrical engineer. Going to school was very difficult in Angola; he had no money to pay for tuition and there were no school buses available, so he would often miss school for a month at a time. Graça used to walk one-and-a-half hours from home to school. Education has always been a top priority for him due to his love of learning and passion for self-improvement.

His career goal is to help improve transportation in Maine by becoming a successful master electrician and electrical engineer. Graça wants to help promote, supervise, and teach journeymen or apprentice electricians, and work with project managers to ensure safe transportation by designing lighting systems on highways. He wants to become a youth mentor and share his life experience while teaching children to overcome challenges and improve both their standard of living and their human rights. During the Covid-19 crisis, Graça volunteered as a translator in different programs and distributed hand sanitizers and masks. He also volunteered for a food delivery program at school, helping transport students to and from school, while also making food deliveries to their homes. Graça looks forward to giving back to the community by doing more service work in the future.



Thomas Neal University of Maine

Thomas Neal

Thomas Neal is a second-year civil engineering student at the University of Maine from Monmouth. Thomas has lived in Maine his entire life and has a great appreciation for the many different outdoor environments Maine has to offer. Thomas took an interest in construction and transportation from a young age, becoming captivated by the logistical challenges that come with road network design and construction. Having grown up in a small rural town, any kind of significantly developed area seemed like the big city. With increased exposure, Thomas gained a better understanding of what it takes to be an engineer and just how important the work of civil engineers truly is. This blossomed into a field of study in college and hopefully a long-lasting career in the future. Thomas hopes to continue learning and working hard to achieve a bachelor's degree in civil engineering. Following graduation Thomas plans to stay in Maine and begin work contributing to our state's infrastructure. The continued work towards improved and sustained infrastructure is vital to the success of our state. In a place such as Maine, road systems are a key avenue in which nearly all economic and personal interests rely on, and it is the civil engineer's job to ensure the success of this transportation for years to come.



Madeline Noble University of Maine

Madeline Noble

Madeline Noble is a first year civil engineering student at the University of Maine. She grew up in the rural town of Lincoln where she attended Mattanawcook Academy. Always having been interested in construction and design, she feels that civil engineering is a perfect fit because it has such a wide range of aspects to explore. The transportation industry specifically spoke to her because it has an impact on people everywhere. Civil engineers work to improve bridges, roadways, railways, and more every day, and this is something Madeline has always wanted to be a part of. Designing or building big construction projects that could help millions of people – that's her dream. Transportation is the perfect field to make that dream come true, and Madeline's goal in her undergraduate career is to gain as much knowledge and work experience as she can. Her plan involves taking transportation electives in school and searching for internships in the summer. After graduation, she hopes to be employed by a company that designs, builds, and improves roadway systems and bridges. Ideally, she wants to relocate to a large, urban area, but Maine will always be a great place she can call home. In her free time, Madeline enjoys spending time outdoors and traveling to new places.

Mackenzie Pray University of New Haven

Mackenzie Pray is extremely excited to be receiving this award and will be using it towards continuing her education at the University of New Haven. She is looking forward to using what she learns at UNH to create a more eco-friendly

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Mackenzie Pray

and inclusive music industry and is thoroughly enjoying her years in college. With both music industry and business administration focuses in her curriculum, she wants to use entrepreneurial skills to inspire others the way she has been inspired by her own grandfather, Millard W. Pray. Her grandfather was instrumental in helping start the MBTA Educational Foundation as a separate scholarship organization. Mackenzie is very proud to be where she is and can't wait to see what the future holds.



Jacob Pray

Jacob Pray University of New Haven

Jacob Pray is a junior at the University of New Haven studying for a bachelor's degree in psychology with a minor in biology. Originally from Methuen, Massachusetts, he lived there for three years before moving to New Jersey, where he lived for most of his life. A few years ago, he moved to attend school in Connecticut. The oldest of seven siblings, Jacob has a younger brother Ben, who turned five



Millard Pray Scholarship

months old in November. While at school he is an active member in the drumline in the marching band and plays in several small ensembles. He is a member of the National Band Fraternity, Kappa Kappa Psi. Currently, he has no plans to attend graduate school, but as someone who loves to learn, he believes it may be an option for the future. In terms of his career, he has his sights set on two different fields. Jacob says he would love to work as a child psychiatrist in the future (which means he would have to go to graduate school), or work in environmental psychology and study how people interact with their surroundings.



Daniel Quinho

Daniel Quinho Southern Maine Community College

Daniel Quinho was born in a small village in Cabinda, Angola called Massala. He is married with five children. When his father found out his mother, who passed away in December, was pregnant with him, he left her. His maternal grandfather took charge of Daniel and his mom. When Daniel turned seven years old, his grandfather sent him to live with his uncle in Tchowa, Cabinda's main city. In 2005, Daniel began a two-year training program for instrumentation technicians at Chevron through their training center at the Malongo oil field in Cabinda. Daniel passed the training and got a good job working on oil rigs for Chevron for 10 years and then for BP-Angola in the Atlantic Ocean and South Korea. Daniel became more

skilled through training in the US, South Africa, and the UK. He did this work until he left the country.

After arriving to Maine in 2018, he attended the College Preparatory Program at Portland Adult Education, later enrolling at Southern Maine Community College to get an associate degree in electrical engineering technologies. His goal is to complete a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering and set up his own business in Maine. He would love to own an electrical maintenance company.



Carter Quist

Carter Quist Northern Maine Community College

Carter was born and raised in Caribou, and studies building construction technology at Northern Maine Community College. At Caribou High School, he was a student in the residential construction program. Carter has always had an interest in carpentry and enjoys the satisfaction of seeing a completed project. He hopes to utilize the skills and knowledge learned in college to pursue a successful career, hopefully in Maine, but is unsure where his career will take him.

Carter enjoys the hands-on aspect of carpentry and takes a great deal of pride in his work. He was always taught to do his best, no matter what it is he is doing. Growing up in Aroostook County, Carter learned the value of hard work. Like most kids in Aroostook County, he developed a strong work ethic, which he will carry with him for the rest of his life. Carter is an avid outdoorsman, who enjoys spending time outdoors, exploring and enjoying all that nature has to offer. With his new skills developed in college, he is confident that he can pursue a successful career and is looking forward to his future.



Paris W. Snow Scholarship



Joshua Reed

Joshua Reed University of Maine

Josh grew up in Dover-Foxcroft, and graduated from Foxcroft Academy before enrolling at the University of Maine as a civil engineering major. After interning with Sargent, he changed his major to construction engineering technology with a minor in survey engineering. His strong desire to work in the field and pursue a career in construction management

influenced his decision. For the past three summers, Josh has interned with Sargent in the field. Currently, he also works in the company's office as a project management intern. During his time in the field, Josh has worked on several different projects, including the Edgcomb Route 1 intersection job. While working on the intersection project, he expanded his field knowledge and gained direct exposure to the transportation industry. After graduation, Josh wants to further his career in Maine, while helping to improve the state's infrastructure and strengthen Maine's economy. Maine is home to Josh's many outdoor hobbies including hunting, fishing, and snowmobiling. He hopes that one day he can also help provide job opportunities to Maine students like himself.



Transportation Trailblazer



Kyle Salley

Kyle Salley University of Maine

Kyle Salley grew up on a small beef farm in Smithfield. Growing up on a farm taught him to appreciate the value of hard work, determination, and responsibility, and he always had an interest in equipment and earth moving. Looking to turn these developed traits into a career, he decided to enroll at the University of Maine to pursue a degree in construction engineering

technology. During the summer of 2021, Kyle interned with Sargent where he spent his summer in Kingfield, Maine on a road reconstruction job for MaineDOT on Route 16 and 23. Kyle learned how to lay pipe, grade calculations, do traffic control, and the daily responsibilities on a road job. When the internship ended, Kyle was lucky enough to be presented with the opportunity to work for Sargent Corporation throughout the school year as a project management intern at the main office in Old Town. In his position, Kyle works with Sargent's project managers and estimators to learn what goes on "behind the scenes" to understand the financial, bid, and management side of many active, past, and future jobs. After graduation, Kyle hopes to continue working for Sargent as a junior foreman and begin working his way up through the hierarchy until he finds the position that best suits his interests, capabilities, and skills.



Timothy M. Folster Scholarship

Parastoo "Parry" Seddiqi University of Maine

Parry Seddiqi was born in Afghanistan in 1994. Her family moved to Iran when she was four years old. After graduating from high school in Iran, her family decided to move out of Iran with the hope of building better lives and having more access to



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Parastoo "Parry" Seddiqui

She believes civilization needs smart designs for cities and roadways because she knows that better designs for cities and roadways will improve human access to different locations. Smart city designing will allow humans to get around more sustainably, improving our quality of life and the environment.

Parry is set to graduate in May of 2023. She is planning to join the workforce or continue her education to earn her master's degree. She has been living in Maine since moving to the U.S., and likes Maine very much, though she has yet to decide where she would like to start her career.



Logan Trombly

Logan Trombly was born and raised in New Hampshire until 2012 when he and his mother moved to Fort Kent to take care of his family. After graduating high school, Logan jumped right into the workforce, securing a job at J.D. Irving's sawmill in Ashland. After a few months he decided to find work a little closer to home and requested a transfer from the sawmill division to the logistics and transportation division. Logan then began working for the railroad, a job he would come to love very quickly. After working into the fall, Logan developed another passion, this one for electrical work. After researching electrical programs throughout

education. Because Afghans are required to pay for all levels of their education if they live in Iran, the family was unable to afford college in that country.

Parry and her family moved to the United States in December 2013. She earned an associate degree in architectural and engineering design from Southern Maine Community College in 2018. In 2019 she enrolled at UMaine to earn a bachelor's degree in civil engineering. She is interested in transportation engineering, specifically roadway and urban design.

Logan Trombly Eastern Maine Community College

Logan Trombly was born and raised in New Hampshire until 2012 when he and his mother moved to Fort Kent to take care of his family. After graduating high school, Logan jumped right into the workforce, securing a job at J.D. Irving's sawmill in Ashland. After a few months he decided to find work a little closer to home and requested a transfer from the sawmill division to the logistics and transportation division. Logan then began working for the railroad, a job he would come to love very quickly. After working into the fall, Logan developed another passion, this one for electrical work. After researching electrical programs throughout

the state, he found a fantastic program at Eastern Maine Community College, where he enrolled. After his first two semesters, Logan returned to the railroad as a seasonal trackman, which not only gave him work experience that he loved but also afforded his tuition for school. Logan plans to return to the railroad after he finishes his final year of schooling and pursuing a signalman position, or potentially becoming a mechanic for train services. Logan is very thankful for the opportunity to have a stable, well-paying job in the state of Maine, and looks forward to his very bright future.



Casey VanDenBossche

Casey VanDenBossche Western New England University

Casey VanDenBossche is a senior civil engineering student at Western New England University in Springfield, Massachusetts. His concentration is in railroad transportation. He is a student athlete on the men's tennis team and a member of the student chapter of ASCE.

He also has a job restringing the tennis racquets for both the men's and women's tennis teams. Casey enjoys going to the other sporting events on campus in his free time. He grew up in West Gardiner, and graduated from Gardiner High School. He has worked as a transportation aide at MaineDOT for the past three summers. Last summer, he worked on a BUILD Grant project, a statewide intersection and traffic signalization update project, starting with locations in Augusta. Some of the projects in his past summers have included the Portland International Marine Terminal, located on the Fore River underneath the Casco Bay Bridge in Portland, and on a bridge replacement project in Chesterville. Casey enjoys the diversity of experience he has received working on various modes at MaineDOT and is excited to remain in Maine after he graduates in 2022. At home, he enjoys hunting and spending time with his pets, family, and friends. ■

FMI: The MBTA Educational Foundation is a 501c3 nonprofit organization that has awarded 486 scholarships totaling more than \$510,000 in the past 20 years. The major fundraiser for the foundation is the annual Super Raffle, but members also make other donations, often to honor a family member or colleague.



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MaineDOT releases Forecast for 2022

MAINE DOT RELEASED its Fall Forecast, which anticipates a 17 percent increase in capital and maintenance expenditures over 2021.

Overall, the department anticipates spending \$483.86 million on projects including bridges, highway construction and rehabilitation, light capital paving (LCP), preservation paving, and highway safety and spot improvements. That is \$70.1 million more than MaineDOT budgeted in 2021.

The increases are directly related to the passage of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) by the U.S. Congress this fall, as well as additional state General Fund investments initiated by Governor Janet Mills' administration.

"The good news about more funding for transportation at the state and federal levels could not have come at a better time," MaineDOT Chief Operating Officer/Deputy

Chief Engineer William Pulver said in a statement at the time of the release. "We are incorporating assumptions from those actions into our 2022 advertise schedule as well as our upcoming three-year Work Plan."

Bridges and highway preservation paving will see the greatest gains, according to the forecast. Over the past five years, MaineDOT has spent an average of \$151.64 million on bridge rehabilitation and replacement and \$99.6 million on preservation paving for the state's highways. In 2022, the department expects to spend \$225.52 million in its bridge program (a 48.7 percent increase) and \$152.84 million on preservation paving (53 percent increase). Likewise, light capital paving is slated to increase by 26 percent to \$35.45 million.

MaineDOT has indicated it will be pulling back in some of its programs: investment in highway construction and rehabilitation



Included in MaineDOT's Fall Forecast are replacement of the Frank J. Wood Bridge in Brunswick (above) and surface work on an 11-mile stretch of Route 236 in Kittery-South Berwick (below).



(\$38.48 million in 2022) will decrease by 49 percent over its five-year average of \$76.62 million per year. Highway safety and spot improvements (\$31.57 million in 2022) also will see a decrease of three percent over a five-year average of \$32.57 million per year.

As part of the forecast, MaineDOT released a list of 21 projects, all valued at \$3 million or more, that the department plans to advertise in 2022, ranging from a replacement for the Frank Wood Bridge connecting Brunswick and Topsham (Quarter 1) to safety improvements to a 1.25-mile stretch of median on I-295 in Portland (Quarter 1).

The list also includes several extensive paving projects, including a hot-in-place pavement treatment on an 11.06-mile section of Route 236 in Kittery-South Berwick and an ultra-thin bonded wearing course on 21 miles of I-95 north of Waterville. A full list of \$3 million-plus

projects planned is available at MaineDOT.gov.

As in past years, MaineDOT plans to aggressively pursue federal transportation grants to augment its programs.

Pulver said: "With the recent increases in construction costs, it is fairly evident that we anticipate putting more funding into similar numbers of projects and miles of treatment as past years. We are hopeful that in future years we can build upon these levels by taking advantage of the new grant programs that will be stood up as part of the new federal law – but, of course, competitive grants are inherently unpredictable." ■

FYI: To download the MaineDOT 2022 Fall Forecast, go to bit.ly/3ehh146, bit.ly/3yREWij and bit.ly/3EmLjS.

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2021 Measures of Growth report finds little gain in transportation

THE NONPARTISAN Maine Economic Growth Council today released its 27th annual *Measures of Growth* Report, a comprehensive snapshot of how the state's economy is performing relative to our long-term goals, to other states, and the U.S. The Report highlights factors shaping the experience of Mainers during this extraordinary time and their impact on our economy. It also points to both reasons for optimism and critical areas of focus to ensure a robust, inclusive recovery.

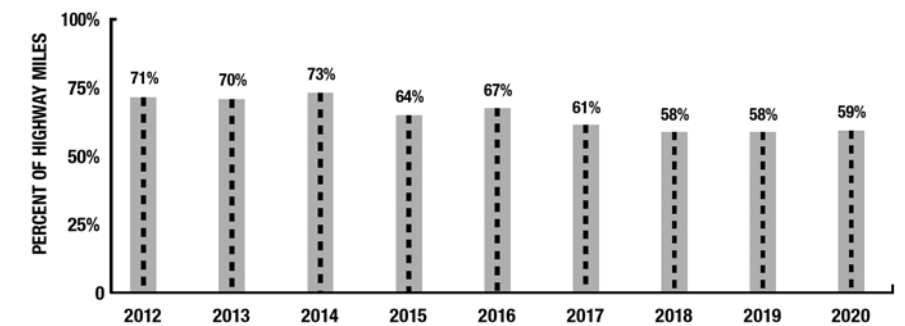
In total, the 2021 *Measures of Growth Report* tracks 30 indicators that represent Maine's assets and areas of challenge. Transportation is one of 30 economic indicators measured in the 2021 report.

In citing data from MaineDOT, the report noted that "in 2020, 819 miles (59 percent) of Priority 1 highways were graded A, B or C, and 579 miles (41 percent) received grades of D or F. This shows slight (1 percent) improvement from 2019 . . ." Still, the council notes, the level is "far below" 2012 levels when 71 percent of the state's priority 1 roads were graded C or better.

The benchmark established by the council is for at least 85 percent of the state's priority 1 roads to be rated "excellent, good, or fair."

"Maine has a lot of work to do before we can reach this benchmark, not the least will be adequately funding our transportation system as we make the transition to electric vehicles," said MBTA President Irv Smith about the

HIGHWAY MILES RATED EXCELLENT, GOOD, OR FAIR



In 2020, only 59 percent of Maine's priority 1 highways were ranked "fair" or better. While that was a 1 percent gain over 2019, it is still far below the 85 percent benchmark established by the council.

council's findings. "Transportation is essential to every community in Maine, especially now, as the state and our country works to address the challenges of the pandemic and the economic recovery."

The council assigned Gold Stars in three areas: pre-kindergarten education, the state crime rate, and water quality. The council assigned red flag in four areas: labor force; research and development spending; broadband connectivity; and housing affordability.

"The *Measures of Growth* annual report has long provided valuable information about what we are doing right, where we

need to improve, and the trends of progress or decline over time," said Yellow Light Breen, Maine Development Foundation's president and CEO. "These indicators reinforce that talent, innovation, and infrastructure must be the focus for strategic investment - while also maintaining public health, a clean environment, and vibrant communities. We look forward to the opportunity to work with policymakers, businesses, and community leaders to stabilize, diversify, and rebuild a Maine economy that is inclusive and sustainable." ■

FMI: To download the report, visit www.mdf.org.



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Madison Branch to become multi-use trail

THE MILLS Administration announced in late November that an abandoned Maine Central Railroad Company corridor is being converted to a new multi-use trail. The trail, known as the Madison Branch, spans 32 miles across Kennebec and Somerset Counties and will become a major connector to the Maine Interconnected Trail System (ITS) and Maine ATV Trail System (MATS). The Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry (DACF) closed on the Madison Branch purchase from Pan Am Railways at the cost of just over a million dollars.

The trail passes over the Kennebec River and the Carrabassett River, offering spectacular views. When construction is complete, the trail will connect thousands of miles of local ATV and snowmobile trails and allow ATV riders and snowmobilers to travel from Oakland to Bingham and beyond, including the Moosehead Lake Region. The route will also be available for non-motorized recreation, including hikers, bikers, and skiers.

"After many years of diligent work by the Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands along with numerous interested parties, I am very pleased



MAINE BUREAU OF PARKS AND LANDS

to see the acquisition of the Madison Branch rail trail," said Maine Senator Bradlee Farrin. "Trail users, students, and educators from Oakland to Jackman will benefit by the increase in miles of trail, and our local economies will be boosted as restaurants, gas stations, and stores will see an increase in business."

The Land for Maine's Future Program (LMF) was a critical component to the state's success in acquiring the Madison Branch rail segment from Pan Am, contributing \$508,000, nearly half of the funds necessary to complete the acquisition.

Snowmobilers will connect to the ITS through the new route, and ATV riders will connect to MATS 115, the only ATV trail connecting Oxford and Franklin Counties with Somerset, Piscataquis, and Penobscot Counties. Conversion of the existing rail line into a recreational trail will require additional funding and may take two years. ■



Pike crew on Main Street in Rutland, Vermont in 1885.

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Downeaster marks 20

THE AMTRAK Downeaster's celebrated its 20th Anniversary at the Wells Transportation Center on December 15. Governor Janet Mills, as well as executive leadership from Amtrak, Pan Am Railways and the Federal Railroad Administration were on hand.

The Downeaster connects northern New England with passenger rail service between Brunswick and Boston. The service was established following a citizen's effort by TrainRiders Northeast to restore passenger rail service to Maine after a 30-year hiatus. At the ceremony, the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority (NNEPRA) recognized Wayne Davis of TrainRiders Northeast for his tireless role in helping to establish the service 20 years ago.

To date, the Downeaster has had more than 65,000 runs between Maine and Massachusetts, transporting more than 8.29 million passengers – the equivalent of nearly 674 million passenger miles. Many improvements have been made to the service including reductions in travel time, increased frequency, and expanded service.

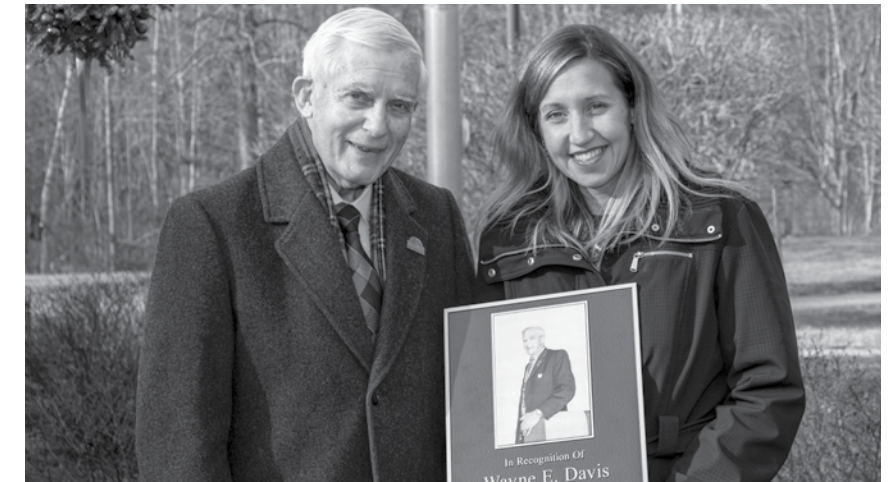
"And the best is yet to come," said Patricia Quinn, executive director of NNEPRA. "We are committed to the sustained growth of the Amtrak Downeaster and are exploring innovative ways to improve mobility, advance safety, combat climate change and support a growing economy." Initiatives under consideration include inbound commuter service, Portland Station relocation, and the addition of a Downeaster platform in West Falmouth, to name a few.

The event included a groundbreaking ceremony on construction of a \$22.9 million infrastructure project in Wells which will improve Downeaster service reliability and set the stage for added trips. ■

FMI: To learn more, visit www.nnepra.com and amtrakdowneaster.com.



Breaking ground on Downeaster facility improvements in Wells (above): Ray Lang, Amtrak; Michael Listing, Federal Rail Authority; Patricia Quinn, NNEPRA; Maine Governor Janet Mills; MaineDOT Commissioner Bruce Van Note; and David Fink, Pan Am Railways. TrainRiders Northeast's Wayne Davis with Natalie Bogart of NNEPRA (below). Davis was recognized for his role in building public support for reintroduction of passenger service to in Maine.



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Pivot, then gather

MBTA, MaineDOT and Maine Section ASCE 'change course' for yearly transportation gathering

IN THE end, despite a surge in Covid cases across the region, 500 Maine transportation professionals gathered on December 2 for an annual meeting of minds. They met online for a series of sessions that included appearances by Maine Governor Janet Mills, U.S. Senator Susan Collins and MaineDOT Commissioner Bruce Van Note.

The event, reconfigured and renamed “Changing Course: A Maine Transportation Gathering” because of the surge, also included well-attended presentations about large-scale 3D printing and the traditional UMaine College of Engineering Student Paper Competition for which Maine Better Transportation Association presents cash awards.

“Welcome to our virtual transportation gathering, known appropriately as ‘Changing Course,’ or pivot or reset or all the kinds of things we’ve gotten very good at doing over the last 22 months,” said MaineDOT Commissioner Bruce Van Note as he opened the online event. He dubbed the past year as “business unusual overtime,” noting that MaineDOT and its contractors have continued to operate under the unusual restrictions and challenges of the pandemic. “And it’s not like there’s nothing to talk about, with the biggest infrastructure bill to pass in a generation.”

The commissioner then introduced Governor Janet Mills who spoke from her office, and also spoke about the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021 (IIJA) that was passed by the 117th Congress and signed into law by President Joe Biden on November 15, 2021.

“It was my pleasure a couple of weeks ago to be present for the president’s signing of the infrastructure bill on the lawn of the White House,” said Mills. “Infrastructure is so important to us as a state, being such a rural state, as you know, and such harsh weather conditions from one season to another.”

Mills cited the Maine Section ASCE Infrastructure Report Card findings that one of every five Maine bridges is more than 80 years old and more than 58 percent of all state bridges are more than 50 years old. Said Mills: “It’s a dangerous situation, and we’ve all seen the news about the bridge in Topsham and Brunswick and that’s just one of many bridges in dire need of repair or replacement.”

“People overuse the term ‘transformational,’ ‘game changer’ and all those things, but this is a huge investment – the first in decades,” said Mills. She noted that Maine will be receiving \$2.4 billion that will help “modernize our vast multimodal transportation system.”

In introducing Senator Collins, who had submitted a video, Van Note reminded transportation leaders that Senator Collins is the ranking member of the Transportation Subcommittee of the Senate Appropriations Committee and has helped secure approximately \$800 million in transportation funds for the state of Maine over the past 12 years.

Senator Collins also talked with great enthusiasm about being at the White House signing ceremony for the IIJA, a bill she said was the “most significant investment in our infrastructure since the interstate highway system was built in the 1950s.” It is a bill, she noted, that is particularly good for rural



Speakers at the gathering (from the top): Governor Janet Mills (left) and Senator Susan Collins (right); MaineDOT Commissioner Bruce Van Note (left) and AASHTO’s Executive Director James Tymon (right); UMaine College of Engineering Dean Dana Humphrey (left) and MaineDOT Deputy Commissioner Nina Fisher; and Dr. Habib Dagher, UMaine Advanced Structures and Composites Center.

states like Maine.

“I was part of the group of 10 senators – five Republicans and five Democrats – who wrote this bill,” said Collins. “We broke through the partisan gridlock and delivered this long-overdue investment for the American people.”

BILL LOWDOWN

The first session of the gathering took a closer look at the historic federal legislation and featured a presentation from American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Executive Director James Tymon, who offered a national perspective on the IIJA, and Commissioner Van Note, who drilled down to what the funding would mean for Maine.

Tymon said that even as the IIJA is being heralded as historic, “we have to temper our expectations” for many reasons. The bill represents between a 20 and 30 percent increase in federal investment at a time when the transportation industry is feeling the pressure of rising costs of materials and labor. He noted that funding for surface transportation accounts for just \$567 billion over five years in the \$1.2 trillion bill, including \$184 billion in advance General Fund appropriations into this bill.

He also noted that, overall, the bill represents significant funding for highways, bridges, transit, passenger and freight rail, and system-wide safety improvements. He said that AASHTO set out a strong wish list as the bill was being negotiated, with an emphasis on funding predictability and flexibility for state DOTs to apply funding for projects that are a “best fit” for that state.

“Finally, we were really hoping for Congress to address some of the innovation that we’re seeing out there in the transportation community, making sure the programs are evolving with the times,” said Tymon. He

said that “they did make good for one area” – investment in infrastructure for electric vehicles.

He offered highlights of the bill: \$118 billion in General Fund transfers to the Highway Fund that includes \$90 billion for highways and \$28 billion for mass transit; \$27.5 billion in new federal formula funding for state bridges (75 percent to replace bridges in “poor” condition and 25 percent to rehabilitate bridges in “fair” condition); \$5 billion for states to implement EV charging infrastructure; \$66 billion for transit; \$91.2 billion for urban and rural transit programs (including \$21.3 billion from the General Fund); more than \$70 billion for existing discretionary grant programs; and \$20.7 billion for new discretionary grant programs, bridges, safe streets, culvert replacement and innovative mobility programs.

MaineDOT Commissioner Van Note said, “there’s a lot going on, a lot of new information” for Maine in the new infrastructure bill. He noted that Maine will be receiving about 28 percent more in federal highway funds in the first year of the five-year authorization than in the previous reauthorization, and hinted that Maine would aggressively seek to augment its share of the pie through discretionary grants, a strategy that has worked well for the state in recent years.

Van Note said Maine would receive a 21 percent increase in highway performance funding; 40 percent more in highway infrastructure funding and 29 percent more for highway safety programs over the levels in the previous reauthorization. He noted that Maine will receive new formula funding for carbon reduction (approximately \$6 million); money to help mitigate the effects of climate change (\$6.8 million); and the EV charging program (\$3.8 million).

He called the increase in formula highway funds “a very healthy bump, and something that could not come at a better time.”

When people say “what are you doing with all that money?” said Van Note, he responds, “we’re paying for construction cost increases.”

He noted that construction and labor costs have increased dramatically between 2018 and 2020: more than a 40 percent increase for paving; and 33 percent more for bridge replacement. He said highway construction has also risen prohibitively. What used to cost between \$1 million and \$2 million per mile now costs \$3 million to \$5 million per rural mile. “You get into town, and you’re talking \$8 million a mile,” said Van Note.

He said Maine will receive about \$12 million (a total of \$48 million) more for the state’s transit programs and plans to compete for the \$66 billion in discretionary passenger rail grants that are written into the bill. Van Note said MaineDOT will pursue opportunities for funding through a long list of new and existing federal discretionary grant programs. Several of the existing programs, including RAISE and INFRA have seen 200 percent or more increases in the IIJA, and there will be new grant programs for bridges, climate resiliency, railroad crossings and rural transportation.

STRENGTH AND SCALE

Dana Humphrey, dean of the UMaine College of Engineering, moderated the first of two technical sessions, Large-Scale 3D Printing, that featured a team from the college and UMaine’s Advanced Structures and Composites Center (ASCC).

“Today, I’m going to talk about printing with polymers, not only just polymers, but printing with wood,” said Dr. Habib Dagher, executive director of ASCC. “Why wood? Because Maine is the most heavily forested state in the country and we can use our wood resources – particularly our wood residuals – as feedstock materials for large-scale printers.”

Will wood work? The answer to that question was, of course, yes, and Dagher showed how the students and researchers at the university were not just developing new materials, but also designing new products that are being used in a variety of businesses. The lab’s 3D printer is 60 feet long, 20 feet wide and 10 feet high and can output 150 pounds of material per hour. The lab made history in 2019 when it printed an entire boat in three days – at the time the largest printed structure ever printed.

“Our goal is green energy and material,” said Dagher. “We want to build big things that are sustainable and with a low carbon footprint and that are recyclable.”

Two of Dr. Dagher’s colleagues expanded on that theme. Professor Roberto Lopez-Anido of UMaine College of Engineering spoke about work the lab is doing with two New England concrete producers, Unistress of Pittsfield, Massachusetts and American Concrete in Veazie, Maine, to develop complex concrete forms including culverts.

James Anderson, senior R & D program manager at ASCC, talked about work the lab has done with boatbuilders and other construction applications to create new, bio-based construction materials that use cellulosic material, including wood fiber, bamboo and hemp. The lab and its partners, including the Oakridge Laboratories, have tested those new materials and found them to be close to aluminum in strength. Said Dr. Dagher: “We’re getting very close to the compressive strength of concrete.”

In February 2022, ASCC will more than triple the output of the lab’s 3D printer from 150 pounds-per-hour to 500 pounds-per-hour, a step Dagher said will further demonstrate that 3D printed materials not only have the potential to be as strong as conventional materials, but also cost-effective.

STUDENTS COMPETE

In the final technical session of the day, four UMaine engineering students presented their research papers on a variety of topics. Alainie Sawtelle, a graduate student in the UMaine Engineering program and 2020 MBTA



Speakers at the gathering (from the top): James Anderson, senior R & D program manager, ASCC and Roberto Lopez-Anido, professor, UMaine College of Engineering; Dr. Ali Shirazi, professor, UMaine College of Engineering and Alainie Sawtelle, UMaine; Madeline Blair, UMaine and Katie Schweizer, UMaine; Samuel Foglio, UMaine and Irv Smith, president, MBTA.



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Scholarship recipient, presented her research titled *Impact of Weather Factors on Maine Lane Departure Crashes*.

Dr. Ali Shirazi, assistant professor at the UMaine College of Engineering moderated the session in which three undergraduate UMaine students competed in the annual Student Paper Competition. Madeline Blair presented her research, *Work Zone Safety & Unsafe Behaviors: Drivers' Self-Assessment of Behaviors*; Katie Schweizer's presentation was titled *Speed Zone Cameras* and examined a camera's impact on roadway safety; and Samuel Foglio's presentation looked at the challenges of, what he titled, *Integrating Automated Vehicles into Our Roadways*. At the conclusion of the session, audience members ranked each presentation via app to determine the winners.

MBTA President Irv Smith announced the winners. Blair took first place with a \$400 prize; Foglio placed second with a \$300 prize; and Schweizer won third and a \$150 prize. Smith also announced that the conference had raised \$725 from registrants' donations to help replace funds that the UMaine Student Chapter of the ASCE in a normal year raise through a 50-50 raffle, and he noted that three of the presenters – Blair, Foglio and Sawtelle – were current or past MBTA Scholarship recipients.

"Let's have a virtual round of applause for each of our winners, along with Alainie Sawtelle, who as a graduate student, did not compete for the cash prizes, but also did an excellent job," said Smith as he closed out the conference. "All four were very impressive." ■

FMI: All sessions from the 2021 Maine Transportation Gathering are available online at mbtaonline.org/event-list/maine-transportation-gathering-2021/.

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Celebrating the season – and the students

Scholarships, Membership Contest and Super Raffle at the 2021 MBTA Holiday Meeting



ANTHONY DELMONACO PHOTOS

Fourteen of MBTA's most recent scholarship recipients were introduced to membership at the 2021 Holiday & Scholarship Meeting in Orono.

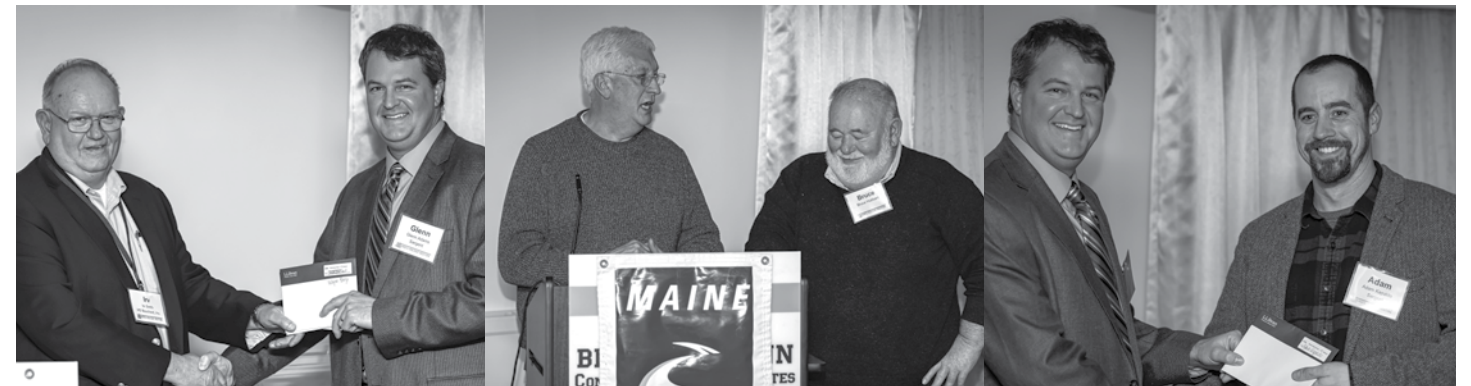
MORE THAN 90 MBTA members, friends, scholarship recipients and their family members gathered on December 9 at the Black Bear Inn in Orono. The occasion was the annual Holiday & Scholarship Meeting, and MBTA President Irv Smith served as the evening's emcee, giving a warm welcome to everyone in the room and bringing everyone up to date on recent good news on the funding front with the passage of President Biden's infrastructure bill.

"We will work with the MaineDOT, the administration and the legislature to make sure the funds from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act – or IIJA – are being pumped into our economy," said Smith, noting that MaineDOT Commissioner Bruce Van Note has said the department expects an increase in federal formula funds of about 25 percent – welcome news as materials and labor costs have increased significantly over the past couple of years.

Smith also recognized the role U.S. Senator Susan Collins has had in ensuring Maine has received more per capita federal transportation grant funding than any other state. "She deserves so much credit for that."

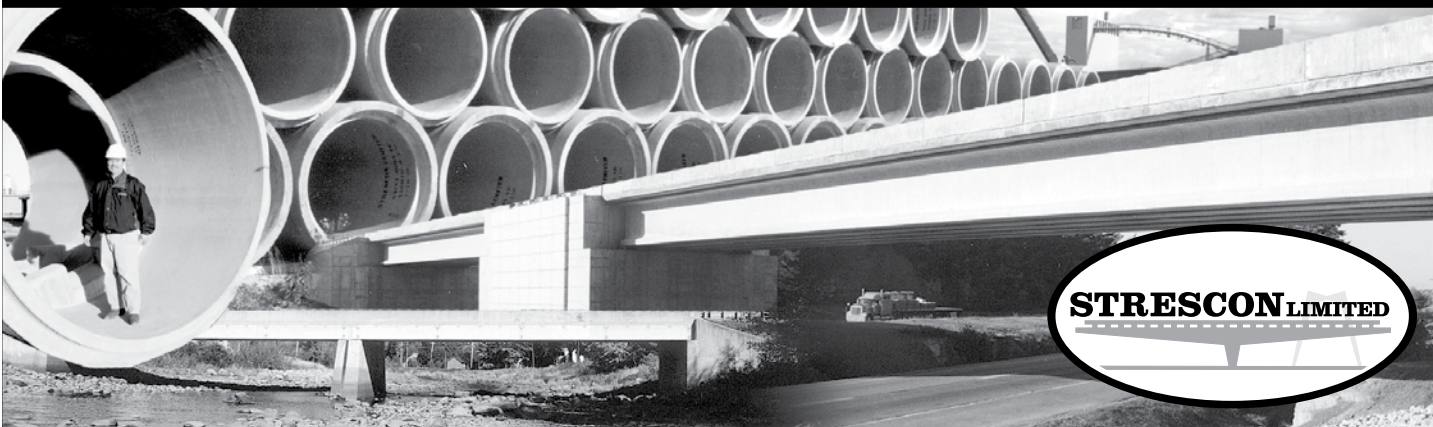
He also introduced several notable guests in the audience: former MBTA President and Maine Representative Tom Martin of Greene and his wife Lisa Sockabasin; Professor Phil Dunn with the UMaine Construction Engineering Technology department; and new corporate members Anthony DelMonaco of Black Bear Crane and John Kenney from Dubois & King. Also recognized were former MBTA presidents and Transportation Achievement Award recipients Richard Martin, retired from Sargent, and now owner of RJM Consultant; Tim Folster, retired from Sargent and recently elected president of the Old Town Council; and Paul Bradbury, director of the Portland International Jetport.

Smith also reported on the December MBTA Board of Directors Meeting held earlier in the day, and thanked members for the continued



MBTA President Irv Smith congratulates super recruiter Glenn Adams (left). MBTA Educational Foundation Chair Tim Folster and long-time committee member Bruce Hubbard draw for student raffle winners (middle). Membership Committee Chair Adams congratulates Adam Kapaldo for his fourth place membership contest win.

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Each of the students present had the chance to say a few words about their studies and goals. Top row (l-r): Brenden Goss, Sam Foglio, Gabriel Ransom and Nara Narith. Second row: Gilbert Basabinka, Joshua Reed, Katie Luce and Kyle Salley. Third row: Madeline Noble, Lucas Bentley, Logan Trombly and Kaleb Barrett. Bottom row: John Lanahan and Thomas Neal.

generous support of the MBTA's work in Augusta and beyond. Said Smith: "It is a credit to all of you – our members – and many others who are not here tonight, that despite the many challenges caused by the pandemic, we were able to have a good year, including with our finances.

Then, he got down to the major piece of business for the evening – introducing MBTA's newest scholarship recipients. There were 14 of the MBTA's 2021 scholarship recipients on hand. (The organization awarded a total of 32 scholarships this year – to students pursuing transportation-related studies at schools throughout Maine and New England).

Then Membership Committee Chair Glenn Adams of Sargent took the podium to announce the results of the annual membership contest (winners and new 2021 members are listed in the accompanying member story).

"Our membership committee concluded its campaign today and recruited – wait for this," said Adams building on the suspense. "Thirty-four new corporate members, one educational institution, 12 individual members, and three student members."

He noted that the 2021 Membership Campaign had been "a record

breaker. . . We had hoped for 25 corporate members and \$12,000 in revenues," said Adams, "and we shattered both goals."

The Holiday Meeting is also the finale for MBTA Educational Foundation's most important fundraiser of the year, the Super Raffle. Five hundred tickets are sold, raising \$17,000 for the MBTA Educational Foundation, a separate 501c3 organization that works to encourage expansion of Maine's transportation workforce by offering scholarships to students.

Again this year, all 500 tickets were sold, and three winners were drawn: Kim Suhr of Wyman & Simpson won the \$7,000 cash grand prize; Ryan Carrigan of Ray Labbe & Sons won the second prize, a \$500 L.L. Bean gift card; and Cathy Tilton of Central Maine Auction Center was drawn as the third prize winner, taking home a \$250 L.L. Bean gift card. Following the meeting, Wyman & Simpson held an employee raffle for the grand prize winnings, and divided the total between two employees. The final order of business was to draw names for the Student Raffle and 50-50 Raffle winners. Gilbert Basabinka, Katie Luce and Nara Narith each took home a \$50 L.L. Bean gift card in the Student Raffle Drawing; and Jeff Costello of Sargent won the 50-50 Raffle – a prize of \$325! ■

FMI: The MBTA holds several regional meetings throughout the year. Visit MBTAonline.org to learn more.

MBTA HOLIDAY & SCHOLARSHIP MEETING

SUPER RAFFLE WINNERS

GRAND PRIZE - \$7,000 CASH: Kim Suhr, Wyman & Simpson
SECOND PRIZE - \$500 L.L. BEAN GIFT CARD: Ryan Carrigan, Ray Labbe & Sons
THIRD PRIZE - \$250 L.L. BEAN GIFT CARD: Cathy Tilton, Central Maine Auction Center

STUDENT RAFFLE WINNERS (\$50 GIFT CARDS)

Gilbert Basabinka, Katie Luce, and Nara Narith

50/50 RAFFLE

Winner (\$325): Jeff Costello, Sargent

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STUDENT HOSTS

Many thanks to those who hosted students at the event: Cross Insurance, Sargent and Richard Martin.

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ANTHONY DELMONACO PHOTOS

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Membership Contest hits new heights

34 new corporate members recruited in 2021

COMPETITION WAS HEATED in the annual MBTA Membership Contest. When all new members were tallied just before the MBTA Holiday Meeting on December 9, a total of 34 new corporate members had been recruited, as well as one educational institution, 12 individual and three student members.

MBTA Membership Committee Chair Glenn Adams announced the winners of the annual contest at the meeting and thanked his committee for their hard work and tireless efforts to broadcast the benefits of MBTA membership

to new businesses and individuals.

1. Glenn Adams, Sargent: 5 corporate members, 1 educational institution and 3 retained members (\$4,000 dues for the association)

2. Wayne Berry, Northeast Paving: 3 corporate members (\$725 dues)

3. Jason Gallant, Wright-Pierce: 2 corporate members (\$800 dues)

4. Adam Kapaldo, Sargent: 1 corporate member and 2 individual members (\$300 dues)
Along with the winners, several other committee members each recruited a corporate

member: Brian Raymond of Northeast Paving; former committee member Parker Brown of Shaw Brothers; Orion Breen of Global Partners LLP; Erik Wiberg of R.W. Gillespie; and Lance Morin of Chadwick-BaRoss's branch in The County.

When all was said and done, the committee, along with staff and a few board members, raised over \$17,000 in new member dues. MBTA congratulates the Membership Committee – and especially Glenn Adams – on this outstanding achievement! ■

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Dr. Dana Humphrey, Construction of the new Ferland Center is in the background.

‘Fortunate’

MBTA’s Maria Fuentes talks with UMaine College of Engineering’s Dr. Dana Humphrey about the university’s new engineering building, Maine’s perennial shortage of engineers and what’s different and what is the same since he first came to Orono to teach 35 years ago. Humphrey has announced his plan to retire later this year.

Maria Fuentes: You received a master’s and doctorate from Purdue, another great engineer’s school (not to mention an undergraduate degree from UNH). There is a lot of good engineering done in the Midwest. Why did you choose to come to Maine to teach 35 years ago?

Dr. Dana Humphrey: I came to UMaine because of the students. When I arrived here for the interview, the search team sat me down to meet with a group of civil engineering (CE) students. They cared so much about how I was going to be as a teacher. I was impressed with their sincerity, and it was quite different from the other three schools where I had interviewed.

Clayton Hoak (retired) and Bill Scott (Maine D&B) were two of the people who interviewed me, and I have followed them throughout their careers. All the students were so sincere, and it was clear they were hardworking and that is what told me I needed to be at the University of Maine. It has been a great ride. I consider myself so fortunate to have been offered this job and to have spent my entire career here at UMaine.

Fuentes: Was the field of engineering very different 35 years ago? Were the things you taught students different? Were the students different?

Humphrey: I don’t think the students were any different 35 years ago than they are today. UMaine students are bright folks, looking forward

to great careers in engineering. What has changed is how engineering work is done. The impact of CADD, and the ability to share work electronically, are each a major shift from 35 years ago. From 1980 to 1983, I worked at an engineering firm in Denver. At that time, if the firm needed additional help, we would contact other company offices and fly engineers in from another city. Today, it is so easy to share work among multiple offices. CADD and other computer programs that aid in design and the ability to work remotely have all been a big change.

Fuentes: When you have spoken at MBTA in the past, you have talked about the shortage of engineers in Maine. How is that measured? And how has that shortage affected the state?

Humphrey: The shortage has remained even though we have increased the number of graduates by 70 percent. You might be thinking we are making progress, but really, we are not. The way I look at demand right now is through a data service called Labor Insights and when I looked recently, the data showed that in Maine, there were 4.2 entry-level job postings for CEs per graduate. For electrical engineering (EE) that number was 6.0. For mechanical (ME), it was closer to balance: 1.2 postings per graduate. Surveying engineering was at 5.4.

From when I looked at the data in February, both civil engineering and electrical engineering have doubled, meaning that the gap used to be two jobs for civil and that has doubled; the same is true with electrical. Obviously, this shows that demand continues to outstrip our ability to graduate engineers.

So, it sounds like we need to produce more engineers.

The engineering work force in Maine has grown over 25 percent in the last 15 or so years. But when we look at the ratio between job postings and graduates, we are not making progress. What we need to do is double the number of engineering graduates.

At UMaine, we grant about 350 engineering degrees per year, and we need to be around 700. That's across all types of engineers. Our placement rate for graduates entering the work force in the last several years has been 99%. That tells me we do not know what the capacity is for the job market or the capacity of the industry to take our graduates. What we do know is that we just don't have enough to go around.

Fuentes: Do you have any favorite classroom anecdotes? Or any specific inspiration from past students?

Humphrey: I'll share a funny story from early on. Early in my career, I taught a materials lab and one of the things students were assigned was to make trial batches of concrete. They needed to figure out how much sand, how much stone, how much cement, water, etc. There was one group who put their mix together and it looked like soup! I looked at it and was trying to figure out what happened, and looking around the lab, I saw a big bucket of sand on the floor. So, I asked: "Was this supposed to be in your mix?" They said: "I guess we forgot the sand!"

Right now, what I find very gratifying is that I routinely have the children of former students in class. Sometimes I have to do some detective work to figure out who they are, but it is great that the parents thought so much of their own education at UMaine that they sent their son or daughter here as well.

Fuentes: Do engineering students ever say the "the dog ate my homework"? Or do they have more technical excuses for being late?

Humphrey: I have never once heard a student say the dog ate my homework. The excuses they have usually go something like: "I did the homework but couldn't print it out." And it may vary from there, but often that is their excuse. To some extent I am a bit old-fashioned, but I like to have them turn in a piece of paper. So, they might ask: "Can I turn it



Humphrey in 1986, when he joined UMaine College of Engineering as an assistant professor.

in this afternoon?" and I usually say yes.

Fuentes: Do you have any achievement of which you are most proud? The new Engineering & Design Center? Winning the Governor's award? The Presidential Public Service Achievement Award? The UMaine Distinguished Professor Award?

Humphrey: There are three achievements that I am very proud of during my time here:

The 70 percent growth in the number of undergraduate engineering students enrolled in the college – that growth is so important because we knew we needed to be producing more graduates.

The second one is the great faculty the college has been able to hire over last 15 or 16 years. These are just awesome folks, and we are so fortunate to have them. They are an incredibly gifted and dedicated group, and they are actually what makes the college great.

The third thing is the Ferland Engineering Center – by the time we cut the ribbon next August, it will be a 9.5-year project for me. It is very gratifying to see this actually happen. And we

have been so fortunate that, every step along the way, the things that needed to happen to make this come to fruition actually happened.

The ACEC of Maine were the sponsors of the Maine Engineering Workforce summit - that really got the message out broadly enough so that the idea that we needed the building to get more capacity, gained great traction. Rick McCarthy was integral to the process. And after the summit, after we were trying to get funding from the Legislature, he was one of several people who were instrumental in that effort to educate legislators that this was a very worthy project.

All the bricks are now in place except for maybe 10 percent, and those should be done soon. Currently, they are doing drywalling in the building and painting on the third floor. They are on schedule and on budget. I am looking out the window at the building, and there is an army of workers out there working away. It is going to make it!

Regarding pricing, which is another area in which we were so fortunate: Consigli was pricing the project at the dip right after covid hit. We locked in very favorable pricing and didn't have to deal with some of the inflation projects are seeing today.

Another truly fortunate event was when James and Eileen Fernald



Humphrey (center) at an event marking installation of the final beam on the new Ferland Engineering Center in 2021.

chose to make the naming gift. The state legislature stepped up with \$50 million in debt service. That was with bipartisan support, and we were so grateful. It just worked.

Fuentes: There are so many exciting things happening at the university in the engineering college. The university and the Composites Center are now home to a federal transportation research center (TIDC) - a prestigious achievement. How long have you been working with Dr. Habib Dagher and sparking all the innovation in materials and construction that has come about as a result? How would you describe Habib in a few words?

Humphrey: Just to be clear, I had the most peripheral influence on the university transportation center. Habib and his colleagues were the ones who made that happen. Now that it is here, it is providing great benefits to the entire country.

Habib was hired in 1985, a year before I was. We both fondly remember working in Boardman Hall at midnight, drafting different research proposals, and we had to print them out before the deadline. Back then, we had a printer on a cart that we would wheel back and forth between my office and Habib's. This was obviously pre-internet, so our internet was a printer on wheels.

How would I describe Habib? As a one-in-100,000 professor, meaning that based on the skills he brings to that position, you would

have to look at 100,000 other professors to find someone else as good as him. He is an incredibly unique individual, both in terms of how visionary he is in looking to the future, and in taking that vision and - in a very humble way - transmitting that into action. He is just truly amazing, and we are enormously fortunate to have him, along with the other engineering faculty, here at UMaine.

Fuentes: It seems like the College of Engineering has more women professors than in the past. What about female engineering students/graduates? How does the ratio of women graduates today compare to the past? What obstacles are there or what is preventing more women from entering and graduating from the College of Engineering?

Humphrey: The number of women faculty in the college has grown from a handful to about 20 percent. That is great progress, but we need to do much better. In terms of undergraduate female students, that number has grown from 15 percent to 20 percent, so it is moving in the right direction but still not adequate. We need more diversity, and this is something that clearly needs more attention. In terms of obstacles, it is really a recruiting problem, not a retention problem, because the graduating rate is essentially the same for men and women. It goes back to recruitment. We have made some progress, but we must continue to work at the K - 12 level to help girls and minorities understand that engineering can be a great career for them.

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Fuentes: You are retiring at a time when the university and donors are making a significant investment in the College of Engineering. How do you think that will change the landscape for the profession in Maine?

Humphrey: We really have seen great investments from the state, and the university and donors, who all recognize the importance of engineering, but it goes beyond that. The development of the Maine College of Engineering, Computing and Information Science speaks to the recognition that engineering and computer sciences are the future of our state. We need both engineering and computing professionals. The Alford gift is a catalyst for this college, which really is going to be transformational. We must look holistically across the University of Maine system to see where the opportunities are. When the college is operational, it could become the best shot in the arm for the Maine economy that we will ever get. When we can generate those types of computer and engineering professionals, that is going to benefit everyone in our state.



Humphrey congratulates a graduating student.

Fuentes: What is your favorite hiking trail in Maine?

Humphrey: Any trail that leads to the top of Mount Katahdin.

Fuentes: Worst road in Maine?

Humphrey: Route 69 that leads north out of the village of Plymouth.

Fuentes: What is your favorite drive in the state?

Humphrey: My favorite route is a bicycling route –

Route 23 from Ripley to West Ripley. On a clear day there are stupendous views to the mountains in the west. Traffic is very light on that ride, you can see Sugarloaf, and it is a wonderful place to bicycle.

Fuentes: Anything else you would like to tell us?

Humphrey: Only that for me, throughout my entire time in Maine, it has been a joy to work with all the engineers, to get to know all my students throughout many years of teaching, and it speaks to how welcoming Maine is as a place. I could not have found a better place to work and to live. And while I will be retiring from the university, I will be staying in Maine. ■

UMAINE

What's in the sack, Santa?

Jason Briggs of VIP Tour & Charter delivers on his Aroostook roots at the holidays

BILL NEMITZ, a columnist with the *Portland Press Herald*, recently celebrated Jason Briggs, vice president of business development for VIP Tour & Charter Co. in Portland for a holiday tradition he adopted more than a decade ago. Briggs distributes tractor-trailer loads of potatoes from The County to food pantries, soup kitchens and other social service organizations throughout southern Maine.

Nemitz heard about Briggs, “a proud son of Aroostook County,” who “grew up picking potatoes each fall and thus came to appreciate the value of a good spud.” Nemitz, who recognizes and appreciates the value of a good holiday story, got in touch.

Fifteen years or so ago around this time of year, Briggs got an idea, according to the columnist. “What’s a greeting card have over a potato?”

Briggs called his old friend Bob Davis, who co-owns the Maine Farmers Exchange in Presque Isle to order a pallet of freshly harvested Maine potatoes.

A single pallet is a ton of potatoes.

The next year, Briggs ordered two pallets. The year after that, three.

“Well, this is fun,” he told himself.

“It’s greatly appreciated,” said Don Morrison, operations manager for Wayside Food Programs, after picking up a second of two tons of potatoes from Briggs this year.

Briggs, generous as he’s been with his time and, when necessary, his wallet, has not done



JASON BRIGGS-VIP TOUR & CHARTER

Jason Briggs of VIP Tour & Charter began his hunger-fighting tradition of donating Aroostook potatoes at the holidays to southern Maine food banks more than a decade ago.

it alone. The Episcopal Diocese of Maine has provided funding and logistical support through its own food pantry at St. Luke’s Cathedral in Portland and other churches statewide. Wayside and the Harrison Food Bank have helped distribute the spuds. Ross Express has helped with the shipping and this past holiday, Brian Guerrette of Guerrette Farms in Caribou contributed all 5,000 lbs. of potatoes for free.

“We put that to good use really quickly,” Briggs told *Maine Trails*.

“Charity can take many forms this time of year,” wrote Nemitz. Including mashed,

baked, roasted and fried.

Briggs has helped coordinate other donations to families in need, including this year working with Aid for Kids, a charity based in Houlton, to distribute thousands of dollars in new clothing and toys. The last of the donations he is helping get out is a shipment of fleece blankets the Kiwanis Club is helping to package and distribute to senior homes in Maine. ■

FYI: To read the full story, visit www.pressherald.com/2021/11/28/ringing-in-the-holidays-with-a-tasty-maine-spud/.

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Verrill ‘combines’ with Boston firm

PORTLAND LAW firm Verrill plans to “combine” with Boston firm Rackemann, Sawyer & Brewster to strengthen its presence in that city, Verrill announced in the *Portland Press Herald* in December.

According to the announcement, the deal is not a typical acquisition in that neither firm is buying the other. However, the combined entity will operate under the Verrill name. Going into the transaction, Verrill has 231 employees and Rackemann has 44, according to Verrill, which has principal offices in Portland, Boston and Westport, Connecticut. “With the combination, Verrill’s Boston office will expand to 60 lawyers, and the firm’s overall attorney headcount

will reach nearly 150 attorneys,” it said in a news release.

The deal advances Verrill’s strategic plan to expand its Boston capabilities while giving Rackemann a larger platform from which to serve its clients. Rackemann has experience in real estate, trusts and estates, as well as an insurance regulatory practice. Verrill’s Boston offerings include real estate, litigation, trusts and estates, health care, intellectual property, labor and employment, employee benefits, executive compensation and family law. Verrill’s and Rackemann’s operations date to 1862 and 1873, respectively. ■

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MMG Insurance goes big for BigRock Mountain

MMG INSURANCE has committed a \$250,000 donation to BigRock Mountain, a Mars Hill ski area. The funding will go toward an upgrade of the ski area's double chairlift that currently takes skiers to the top of the mountain.

BigRock Mountain ski area recently announced a capital campaign project to raise \$2.9 million to upgrade its current double chairlift with a new, state-of-the-art Doppelmayr quad chairlift. The lift will more than double the uphill capacity and shorten the lift ride for skiers by eight minutes. It also will help establish BigRock as a premiere family destination ski area.

"BigRock has been a pillar of recreation within our region for many years and MMG is pleased to support the installation of a new lift which will allow the ski area to continue serving families for generations to come. This investment supports economic development and tourism in our region and bolsters the health and wellbeing of families young and seasoned who frequently recreate here," said Larry Shaw, MMG president and CEO.

"...As MMG Insurance gears up to celebrate our 125th anniversary in 2022, this capital donation marks MMG's largest singular donation to date and demonstrates our support and steadfast commitment to Aroostook County."

With the overall economic impact of skiing in the State of Maine exceeding \$1 billion annually, larger ski areas increasing lift ticket prices, and trends demonstrating growth in outdoor recreation, BigRock anticipates this advancement to set the mountain apart as a destination for skiers in Maine, Canada, and beyond. ■

FMI: To learn more about MMG Insurance, visit www.mmgins.com.



The families of MMG employees Terri Chandler and Kristen Clark tackle the slopes at BigRock Mountain.

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Ware-Butler wins Governor's Award

WARE-BUTLER WAS one of three Maine businesses announced on December 21 as winners of the 2021 Governor's Awards for Business Excellence (GABE).

Governor Janet Mills and Department of Economic and Community Development Commissioner Heather Johnson also presented awards to Acme Monaco Corp., and ReVision Energy.

Ware-Butler Building Supply received the Governor's Rural Revitalization Award. Since its founding in 1925, Ware-Butler has grown to 13 retail locations throughout central Maine and beyond, including the flagship store in Waterville. In 2020, Ware-Butler was acquired by Pleasant River Lumber Co., headquartered in Dover-Foxcroft, and the family of companies now employs more than 700

people.

Mills said in a news release, "These extraordinary businesses continue to meet the challenges of the pandemic with innovation and ingenuity, adapting to meet the needs of Maine people. Every day they provide good-paying, rewarding jobs that keep people here in Maine, and attract talented people to our state."

The state has given the awards annually since 1991 to recognize businesses with "a high level of commitment to their community and employees, as well as exemplary performance in the manufacturing or service profession." ■

FMI: To learn more about Ware-Butler, visit warebutler.com.

Hubbard joins Kleinfelder

STEPHANIE HUBBARD has joined Kleinfelder as operations manager for the firm's Portland, Maine, office. Hubbard has more than 20 years of experience in engineering, working for firms in Maine, Massachusetts and Connecticut, most recently 12 years at Wright-Pierce in Topsham.

"We are excited to have Stephanie join our team," said Kleinfelder's Maine/New

Hampshire Area Manager Matt Steele. "Stephanie's technical expertise will be key in helping our project teams develop innovative and sound recommendations that meet our clients' needs."

Hubbard earned her master and bachelor of science degrees from Worcester Polytechnic Institute. She volunteers with Big Brothers-Big Sisters of Midcoast Maine and Mid Coast Hunger Prevention.

Kleinfelder is a team of engineers, scientists, and construction professionals serving the transportation, water, and energy industries. The firm has offices in Portland and Augusta, Maine, and throughout the United States, as well as Canada and Australia. ■

FMI: To learn more, visit www.kleinfelder.com.



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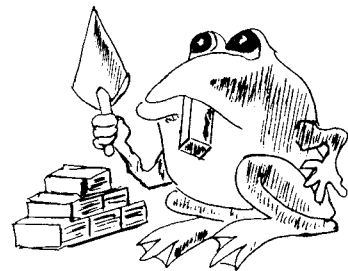


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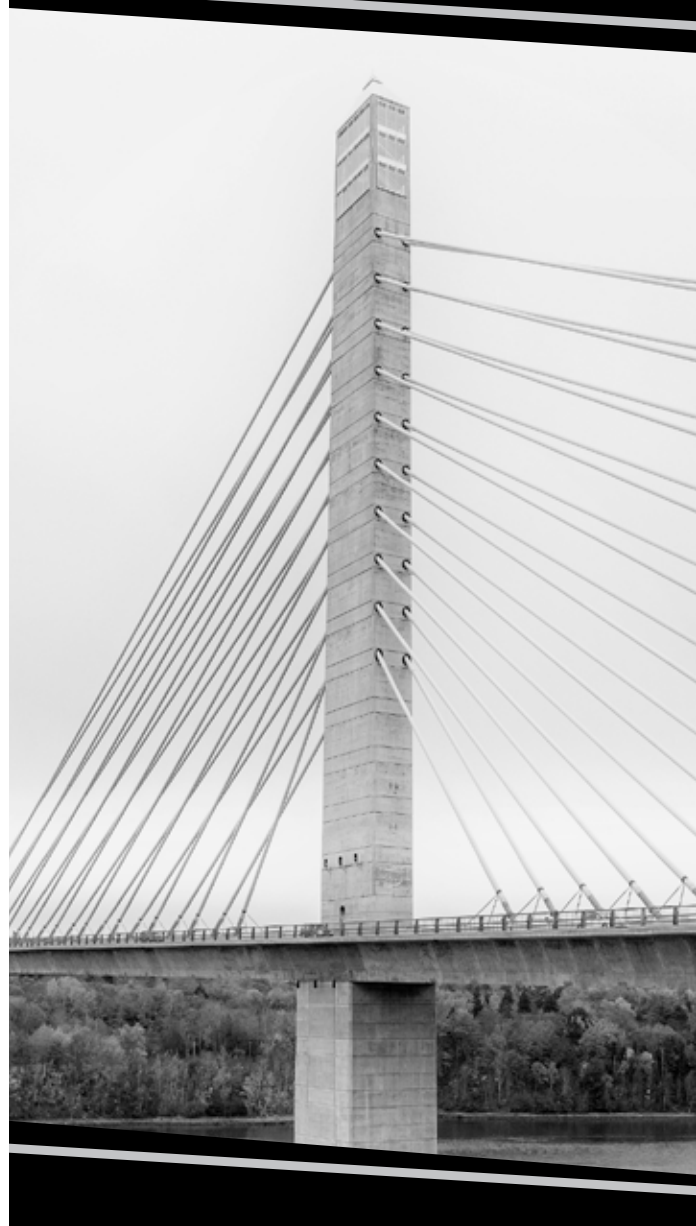
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Greenlaw a 'Top Young Pro'

ENGINEERING News Record (ENR) announced its 2022 class of New England's Top Young Professionals in early November - including Ariel Greenlaw from HNTB's office in Portland, Maine.

The awards program honors individuals who have built extraordinary industry portfolios in just a few short years. In addition, many donate significant amounts of time and expertise to serve their communities. The 2022 class includes top young engineers from Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont.

Greenlaw earned a bachelor of science degree in 2004 and a master's degree in civil engineering in 2006 - both from UMaine - where she performed research on blast and ballistic-resistant structures for the Army Corps of Engineers. Upon graduation, she joined Louis Berger in their Manchester, New Hampshire office where she worked on a variety of transportation projects, including the I-93 widening. Moving back to Maine, she then spent the next eight years working with TY Lin in its Falmouth office before joining HNTB in 2017. She currently is traffic section manager and is based in the firm's South Portland office.

She currently serves as co-chair of public relations for the New England Institute of Transportation Engineers and president of the Maine Institute of Traffic Engineers. She also has served on the organizing

committee for the 2021 and 2022 Maine Transportation Conference. Greenlaw is the only engineer from Maine to be included on the list. A list of other honorees from MBTA member firms follow: Erica Blonde, environmental planner at HNTB Corp., Boston; Vanessa Borkowski, senior civil engineer at Stantec in Hartford, Connecticut; Andre St. Germain, deputy department manager of structures at AECOM, Rocky Hill, Connecticut; and Jason Hutchins, project team leader, project engineer at CHA Consulting Inc., Boston. ■



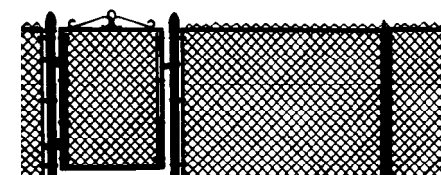
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Global shipping and the niche role Maine ports play

FOR MONTHS, we have seen the aerial footage of massive ships, stacked high with containers, queueing off the coast of California. If you had a Christmas gift that didn't quite make it under the tree in time, you are probably aware of the implications of the recent bottlenecks at our nation's ports. The primary cause of this problem is high U.S. consumer demand – particularly for goods coming from China. The situation is further exacerbated by worker shortages and manufacturing disruptions primarily related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Some have raised the question of whether smaller ports – like those in Maine – could play a role in relieving some of the pressure.

International goods arriving in the United States typically come through three major regional hubs: metropolitan Los Angeles, New York/New Jersey, and southern Louisiana. The ports in these regions are massive facilities. The Port of Los Angeles bills itself as the busiest container port in North America and the busiest seaport in the western hemisphere. Port facilities in New York, New Jersey, and Savannah are the largest container ports on the east coast. Southern Louisiana has been a major conduit for bringing freight to our nation's heartland for centuries. These mega-ports handle millions of containers every year.

Maine has three deep-water ports – Portland, Searsport, and Eastport – that, comparatively, are much smaller in scale to our nation's mega-ports. On any given day, the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach handle more freight than Portland's International Marine Terminal (IMT) handles in an entire year. While it would be possible for a Maine port to absorb some of the added freight from frustrated shippers at larger ports, that scenario is unlikely to occur in a significant quantity for several reasons: capacity, capability, and cost.

The IMT may be a small player on the national stage, but the IMT has been experiencing exciting levels of growth in recent years. The Portland waterfront site even saw a modest increase during the first year of the pandemic. Projections for 2021 show another record-breaking year. Shipping volumes are measured by TEU – 20-foot equivalent unit. One TEU is equal to one 20-foot-long shipping container. A typical 40-foot-long container is 2 TEU. Here are the last five years of TEU data for the IMT:

YEAR	VOLUME	% CHANGE
2017	17,515 TEU	--
2018	22,325 TEU	+27%
2019	27,746 TEU	+24%
2020	28,718 TEU	+3.5%
2021	37,800 TEU (estimated)	+32%

While there is still room for growth, the capacity of Maine's ports

“Maine’s ports are resilient and offer a niche service to select shippers. Rather than thinking of northern New England as the “end of the line” when it comes to moving goods, perhaps we need to rethink where the lines are drawn.”

is limited. For comparison purposes, some of the biggest vessels carry 15,000 TEU. A ship of that magnitude would overwhelm any port facility in Maine. It would take major investments in infrastructure for our deep-water ports to be able to handle freight deliveries of that size. Additional labor, port equipment, and acreage to place containers would be required at a minimum, but pier face and channel dredging and an extension of the cargo piers would be necessary to accommodate a vessel of that size. Projects like this can take years to plan and are extremely expensive.

Capability is another issue. Not all ports offer the same services. If a shipper has certain criteria for its freight, then a smaller, niche port (like those in Maine) may not be able to provide the necessary services. Some freight cargo requires fumigation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service inspection, cold storage, or specialized port equipment. Requirements like these can dictate which ports are appropriate for certain shippers. The IMT continues to grow and has plans for projects to increase the services offered at the terminal. For instance, the Maine Port Authority is partnering with a developer to construct a 120,000-square-foot cold storage facility on site. Construction is expected to start in February.

Costs are obviously the biggest driving factor in the choices freight shippers make. If goods are coming from China or other Asian markets, diverting to a smaller port may be cheaper and more cost effective to avoid delays, but may end up costing the shipper more in the long run. That's because the freight would then need to be put on a truck or train and travel a longer distance with multiple connections. Freight costs significantly increase the more times the container is handled, so if it comes into a smaller port, that facility may not have the connections by rail or truck to make it more cost-effective. In Maine, Portland and Searsport offer connections to Class 1 railroad service, but Maine's southern two deep-water ports may still not be viable alternatives after a shipper crunches the numbers.



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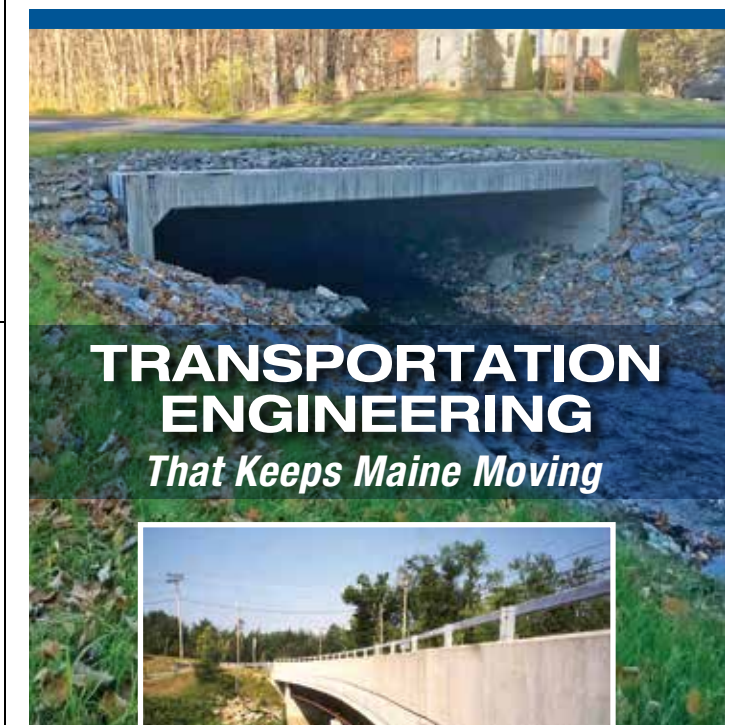


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The Maine Department of Transportation and the Maine Port Authority continue to work to make our state's ports more attractive to developers. Pursuing cold storage options at the IMT is one example of that. Another is the recently released study about the feasibility of developing infrastructure in Searsport to support Maine's offshore wind industry. A companion study to evaluate all three of Maine's deep-water ports for potential offshore wind development is also nearing completion. That report should be finished in early 2022.

Maine's ports are resilient and offer a niche service to select shippers. Rather than thinking of northern New England as the "end of the line" when it comes to moving goods, perhaps we need to rethink where the lines are drawn. Maine could be a key link on a new shipping line that serves the U.S., Europe, and the Arctic. Finding new markets has contributed to the success of the IMT, proving that Maine's ports are among our state's strongest assets. Continued investment and careful planning will help the IMT and other Maine port facilities continue to grow and fill important niche roles. ■



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Taking down Maine's last billboard in York County in 1984.

THE MARCH 1961 edition of *The Maine Trail* ran a story about passage of Legislative Document No. 1356 – an act that prohibited billboards within 660 feet of the interstate with some exceptions – mostly determined by local zoning regulations in commercial and industrial areas. The bill enabled the state to collect \$711,000 of additional federal funds without requiring state matching funds, according to then State Highway Commission Chairman David H. Stevens.

Sixteen years later in 1977, Governor James B. Longley signed into law a bill that called for removal of about 3,000 remaining roadside billboards. Maine was joining Hawaii and Vermont in banning billboards, a move that proved, as Longley told the press at the signing, “the people own Maine.” The final sign, a double-sided billboard in York County, came down in 1984.

That law had been championed by Marion Fuller Brown, a farmer and state legislator from York who was the first woman to head the Maine Milk Commission and also helped found the Coalition to Preserve Scenic Beauty, Scenic America – now known as Scenic America – the country's only nonprofit “with the sole purpose of safeguarding the scenic qualities of America's roadways, countryside, and communities.”

Looking back at her career in politics, Brown once said, “It does not require extraordinary training to participate in politics. Everyone can take the first step by informing themselves about the candidates and the issues.”

Maine's billboard ban has proven popular in a state that treasures its natural heritage. In 2013, nine separate bills were introduced requesting variances to Maine's sign regulations, all which advocates defeated, arguing that such exceptions would unjustifiably weaken the law. ■

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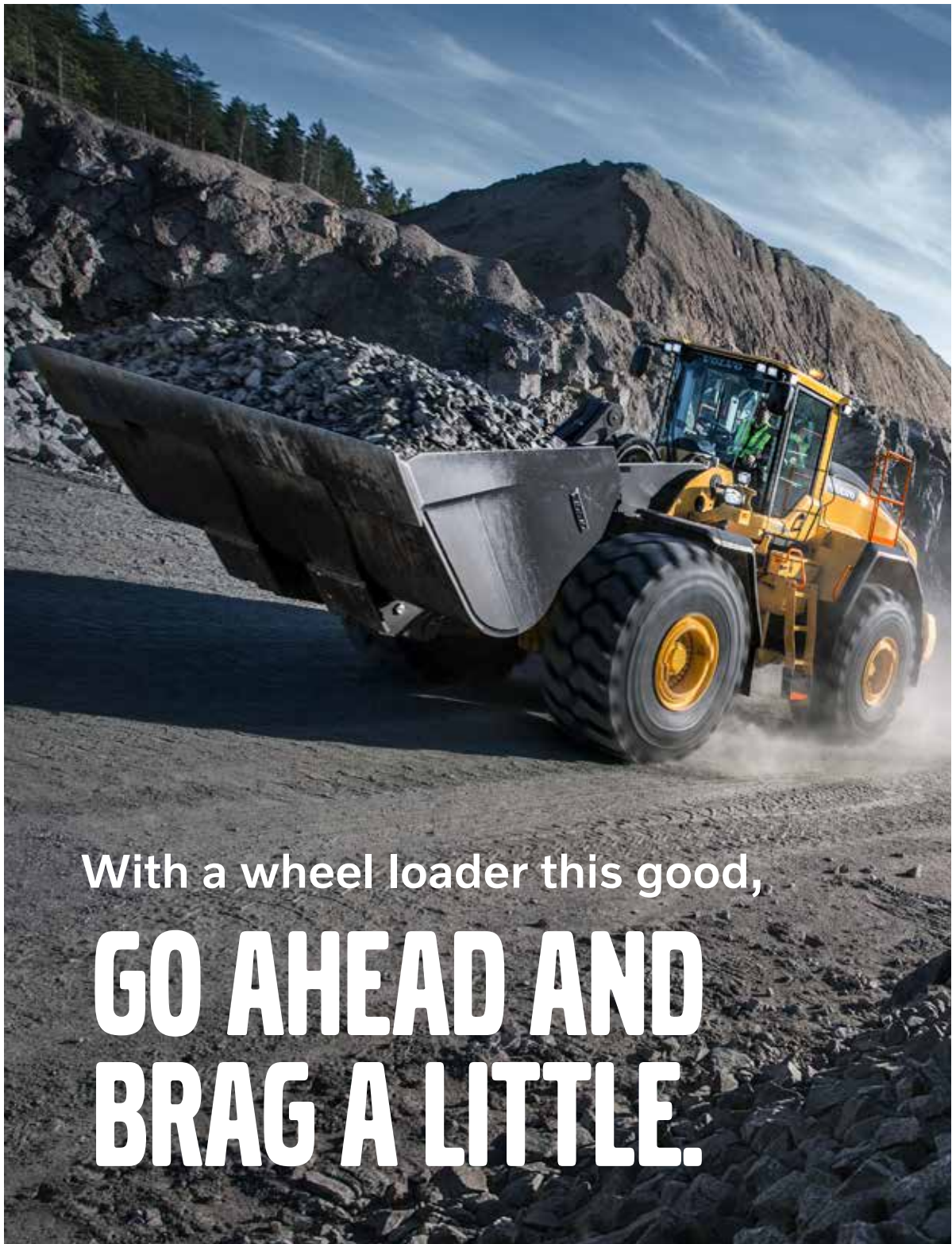


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