The Workforce Development System

Guiding Principles

- Empower Maine people with career and life skills through education and training
- Create a 21st century Workforce Development System by integrating Perkins and Workforce Investment Act (WIA) programs
- Advancing the interests of the Career Technical and Public School System
- Enhance the state and local workforce and economic development systems

The Vision

- Requires partnership among businesses, schools, organized labor, government and communities
- Must be easy to understand and navigate
- Must adapt quickly to changing technologies and market demands
- Everyone should be a lifelong learner
- Skilled workers are essential to economic growth
- Maine people will have a high quality of life with rewarding work and prospering communities
- The state's economy will be competitive

Everyone should be a lifelong learner.

Competitive Skills Scholarship Program - CSSP

The Competitive Skills Scholarship Program (CSSP) is a revised version of the Maine Workforce Investment Council (MWIC) and the Maine Department of Labor’s Workforce Investment Act (WIA) programs. The program is designed to provide scholarships to eligible individuals who are pursuing employment in high-wage, high-demand industries. It is a way to help the state and local workforce and economic development systems be competitive.

Lifelong Learning Accounts - LLA

Lifelong Learning Accounts (LLA) are an added benefit to the CSSP. Participants will establish a NextGen R account) for the employee’s higher education expenses. Outreach and informational sessions are provided by Maine CareerCenters. Free advising services to assist men and women obtain postsecondary education and training for a good paying job in a high wage, high demand occupation and help businesses who need to hire more skilled people in various occupations. It’s a win-win program.

Maine Jobs Council (MJC)

The MJC is a key resource that provides information to businesses and employers on how to assist people who want to compete with one another. The MJC also promotes the development of a world-class workforce in Maine.

The MJC continues to mature in its role as the State Workforce Investment Board, with much of the activity related to the Council’s work for 2007.

Highlights from the Standing and Ad Hoc Committees this past year include; the Apprenticeship Committee focusing on the expansion and enhancement of the Apprenticeship Program, led by Tom Bedard, who is equally knowledgeable in both locals and state programs. The Apprenticeship Committee is open to any employer who is interested in forming a new apprenticeship program, headed by an individual who is equally knowledgeable in both locals and state programs.

Lifelong Learning Accounts Navigator - LLAN

In September, 2007, the Maine Department of Labor launched a new effort to increase accessibility to financial aid opportunities for people with disabilities. The program, called LiLAs, stands for Lifelong Learning Accounts. It is designed to help people with disabilities fund their education and training. LiLAs are individual investment accounts, matched with federal and state funding.

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The Maine Jobs Council (MJC) is a volunteer group of citizens, from business, labor, education, community organizations, and the public working to ensure that our workforce is prepared for 21st century jobs.

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The Women’s Employment Committee serves as the primary forum for discussion of employment issues and opportunities related to women in the workforce. The Committee’s activities focus on a variety of employment issues and opportunities related to women in the workforce, including:

- **Pay Equity**: Addressing the gender pay gap and promoting fair compensation for women in non-traditional occupations.
- **Flexible Work Arrangements**: Supporting policies and practices that allow women to balance work and family responsibilities.
- **Workforce Development**: Developing strategies to attract and retain women in the workforce.
- **Career Development**: Providing opportunities for professional growth and advancement.
- **Workforce Diversity**: Promoting diversity and inclusion in the workplace.
- **Education and Training**: Ensuring access to education and training programs that prepare women for opportunities in the workforce.

The Committee is made up of representatives from various industries and organizations, including:

- **Sue Grunder – Chair**
- **Jeanne Shorey Paquette**
- **Brenda Gallant**
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- **Gary McGrane**
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The Women’s Employment Committee is also responsible for the implementation of the Workforce Development Plan, which includes the development of initiatives to address the needs of older workers, those with disabilities, and other underrepresented groups in the workforce.

Committee members are responsible for identifying and developing strategies to meet the needs of these groups and for coordinating with other stakeholders to ensure the implementation of effective policies and programs. The Committee meets on a regular basis to discuss these issues and to develop new strategies and initiatives to address the needs of women in the workforce.