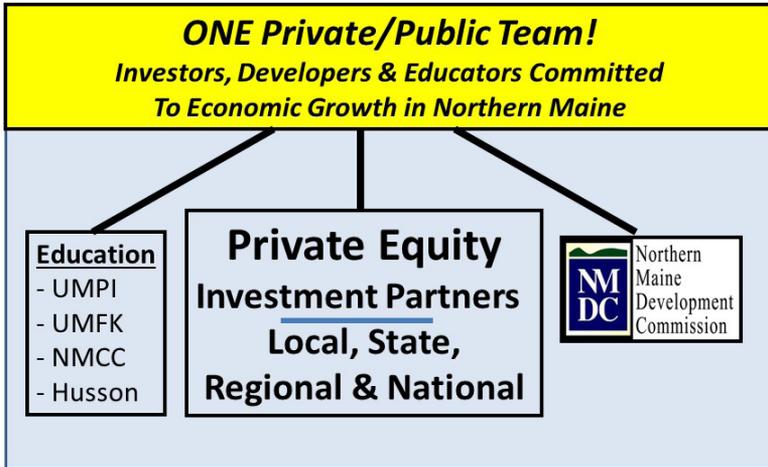


“The Aroostook Partnership”



Towle Selected New Aroostook Partnership President and CEO

AROOSTOOK COUNTY — The Aroostook Partnership is proud to announce and welcome Paul Towle as new CEO and President of the economic development organization.

Towle grew up in The County, graduated from the University of Maine and later worked and lived in the Boston and southern New Hampshire areas. After successful military and private sector careers, he and his family relocated back to Aroostook County and has spent the last 8 years as COO of the successful I Care Pharmacy in Fort Fairfield.

“The Search committee was looking for someone with a broad background and work history,” said AP Chairman Jason House. “We coveted someone with great interpersonal skills, a solid reputation

and private sector work experience. We needed a critical and strategic thinker who already had or could build a strong network of key stakeholders to continue to move the Partnership forward.”

Vice-Chair Matt McHatten, who also served on the search committee, is also excited about Towle’s leadership as it relates to continuing the success of the collaborative efforts of the Aroostook Partnership.

“We have seen time and time again the critical need of cohesiveness as we approach the issues and opportunities impacting the County’s future,” said McHatten. “Paul’s experience and knowledge within nearly all facets of our area will certainly strengthen the network of our membership.”

Towle resides in Presque Isle with his wife Jane, Broker/Owner of Remax County.

Annual Report 2018

AROOSTOOK
Partnership

Letter from the President/CEO

As the new President & CEO of Aroostook Partnership, I'm pleased to have been given the opportunity to work with such a dedicated and distinguished Board of Directors and engaged group of Partners. As I begin the process of assessing our needs and challenges, identifying our strengths and opportunities, and working toward strategies we will need to meet the Partnership and County's goals, it will be a collective effort. I will visit with as many of you as possible, tour your businesses and listen to the unique input and advice you all offer toward the formation of the Partnership's strategy.



Paul Towle

2018 has been a year of leadership transition for the Partnership as the previous president Bob Dorsey retired and the executive search replacement process concluded with my hiring. I accepted this great responsibility to lead an impressive organization with my eyes wide open and fully aware of the weight and importance of the mission. I hope to continue the momentum and many successes created by Bob and the Board to further develop some of these initiatives, while also testing new directions intended to yield even more favorable results.

Through this year of transition, the Partnership continued to gain traction and produce results in 2018. In the past year, the Partnership has briefed numerous towns and organizations on the 'Caring for the Crown' report and strongly promoted increased collaboration and consolidation considerations across the County to maintain our cost of living and promote the advantages of living here. This year has seen a major focus on electrical transmission costs with ReEnergy petitioning Emera to eliminate those costs so that ReEnergy in Ashland could remain operational. Emera granted that request until 2020. Education to Industry efforts also continue to link businesses with educators to address workforce shortages.

Our Partnership is made up of many members from all walks of life who care deeply about The County. This is what led me to pursue this leadership position. My deep passion toward The County where I was raised has made me who I am today, and I'm driven to execute on that passion going forward. It's strengths, opportunities, resources and quality of life advantages have not changed and remain our key differentiators when it comes to attracting new families and workforce participants to our area.

All the synergies represented at our table collectively help create the can-do attitude for which Aroostook County is well-known. The challenges we face are common in nearly every rural region in the country. In recognizing this, our efforts in 2019 and beyond will be to focus on embracing the changes Aroostook County has endured over the past 25 years while working toward creating a renewed region which utilizes its rural demographic in the most efficient and vibrant ways possible. By doing so, and with a laser focus on workforce development, we will all proudly witness the slowing of and eventual positive swing in our demographic trending.

Thank you again for your confidence in my abilities, trust in my leadership and willingness to work in unison with me to make our great County the best it can be. I especially wish to thank all the investors who believed in the genesis of an "Aroostook Partnership" and still understand the importance of driving The County's success strategies through the collaborative work of the Partnership. With a team of this caliber, I look forward to a productive 2019 and far beyond.

AP Board Members

Officers

Jason House - Chairman - TD Bank

Matt McHatten - Vice Chair - MMG Insurance

Robert Clark - Public VC- Northern Maine Development Commission

Gina LeBlanc-Eggert - Secretary - Emera Maine

Jennifer Buckingham - Treasurer - Tempo Employment

Board Members

Jon Prescott - Katahdin Trust Co.

Kris Doody - Cary Medical Center

Matt Bouchard - MMG Insurance

Greg LaFrancois - Northern Light A.R. Gould Hospital

Cal Deschene - UIG

Carter Vaillancourt - Daigle Oil

Mark Wilcox - Dead River Co.

Cheri Doak - Key Bank

Jason Parent - ACAP

Chris Anderson - FA Peabody

Jacob Buck - Maine Malt House

Ryan Bushey - Louisiana Pacific

Jon McLaughlin - SADC

Carl Flora - Loring Development Authority

Timothy Doak - RSU 39

Joy Barresi-Saucier - Empower Aroostook

Tim Crowley - Northern Maine Community College

Ray Rice - University of Maine at Presque Isle

John Short - University of Maine at Fort Kent

Jennifer Flynn - Husson University

Aroostook Partnership Major Investors



Young Professionals Panel Highlights 2017 Annual Meeting



AP Board of Directors Vice Chair Matt McHatten moderates a “Young Professionals” panel at last year’s Annual Meeting.

PRESQUE ISLE — Having a solid foundation may be one of the keys to attracting and retaining younger people in Aroostook County. That was one takeaway from a young professionals’ panel discussion at the Aroostook Partnership (AP) Annual Meeting Thursday, Nov. 16 at Northern Maine Community College.

The panel, comprised of Chelsea Henderson of FA Peabody Co., Jacob Buck of The Maine Malt House, Katie Zarrilli of WAGM-TV, Carter Vaillancourt of Daigle Oil Company and Kasey Soucy of Cary Medical Center, relayed a familiar theme. Having a family as a foundation or making a foundation of good friends and becoming part of the community is essential for attraction and retention.

Matt McHatten of MMG Insurance moderated the panel and said the reason to hear from the group of young professionals was clear.

“Given the major issue of our aging workforce in Aroostook County, a primary initiative of the

the Partnership is attracting and retaining youth to fill the many openings forthcoming regardless of industry sector,” he said. “If we are truly going to attack this issue, we need both the perspective and engagement of the next generation to assist in building strategies. This dialogue was the first step in many more needed to identify issues and solutions.”

Buck said he was excited to participate in the discussion and hopes it leads to solutions to the issues facing Aroostook County.

“I am sure the audience is quite familiar with the issues as we see them, but I think that it is great to be able to explain our point of view,” he added. “It is our generation that we are trying to attract and bring here to Aroostook. Millennials have different views on work, life, culture, etc. If nothing else, I hope that this will be the start of the effort combining both millennials, baby boomers and everyone in between, to help solve the issues at hand and change the economy and dynamic of our area.”

Letter From the Chair

We started this year with the sobering “Caring for the Crown Report”. While this update to the “Tarnished Crown Report” provided a great deal of demographic challenges that face Aroostook County, it also gave the Aroostook Partnership the hard data to show that our mission is more important than ever and even more importantly that our work is making a difference. The dire population drop predicted 15 years ago did not occur. Although our population has continued to decline, there is no doubt that our member’s commitment, both in time and financial resources, has been impactful. We must continue to do what must be done; the prosperity of the County depends on it.



Jason House

As we moved into the dead of winter, AP continued to work with the forestry industry trying to find solutions to the potential closing of the ReEnergy Biomass facilities. The work done with the Northern Maine Forestry Cluster and the Aroostook Energy Association (a Cluster initiated group) was not able to keep both facilities open, but I believe was instrumental in helping facilitate discussions that included reducing charges to ReEnergy and helping to keep Ashland open.

In early spring, Bob Dorsey advised the Board that he would be retiring later in the year. Bob’s efforts over six years were commendable and he brought an incredible amount of energy and passion to the position. We set up a nominating committee and a search commenced for Bob’s successor. We enlisted the services of an executive recruiter and ultimately hired home grown talent in Paul Towle. Paul’s story is very similar to Bob’s. Born and raised in Aroostook County, Paul moved away for a number of years before returning to finish raising his family, an example of what we hope to replicate hundreds of times over. Paul on-boarded in early fall and has proven to be a quick study and everything we had hoped for when we selected him from a pool of hundreds of candidates.

The above are only a small sampling of the voluminous efforts that took place in 2018. In addition, we held our Entrepreneur of the Year awards dinner and took over the Opportunities Aroostook website. We continued joint efforts on Virtual Job Shadowing, educational bus tours, legislative conference calls, political debates, business teacher socials and the Aroostook 2020 series. We also strengthened our relationship with Momentum Aroostook. These young leaders will be running our organizations and businesses before we know. All of these initiatives continue to bring exposure and value to our member groups and companies and they are vital for continuing our mission.

Thank you very much for your membership in the Aroostook Partnership. I couldn’t be more pleased with the direction we are headed and our accomplishments to date.

Sincerely,

Jason A. House
Chairman of the Board
Aroostook Partnership

For more than 14 years the Partnership has been a champion for economic development in the region.

Engagement with lawmakers included a successful Second District Congressional Debate in conjunction with WAGM-TV, weekly legislative calls with lawmakers and investors, and disseminated information from the “Caring for the Crown” report to local governments and civic organizations.

2019 will bring the return of Aroostook Day at the Legislature. This first year of a legislative session is tentatively set for February 5, 2019 at the Senator Inn in Augusta.

Marketing activities and initiatives have included:

1. Addressed numerous civic organizations and briefed town and city managers.
2. Personal contact with business developers and CEO’s.
3. Brainstorming activities with Loring Development Authority.
4. Continued newsletter mass e-mailings.
5. Secured news coverage in local and statewide media.
6. Participated in statewide business gatherings.

Mission Statement

Aroostook Partnership is the private/public partnership speaking with one voice and engaging the private sector leadership, talents, and resources in the region to ensure the economic survival and growth of Aroostook County.





FOREST CLUSTER



- Continued to facilitate Forest Products Industry Cluster gatherings (3 in 2018).
- Advocated for the industry to the legislature.
- Dimensional lumber prices are way up.

Energy



ENERGY



- Advocated for importance of ReEnergy to the forest economy.
- Hosted the Maine PUC in the region to discuss concerns.
- Meeting with state Energy Director.

www.aroostookpartnership.org



OpportunitiesAroostook.com is up to 7,000 page views a month. Employers are urged to post all job opportunities to this free site provided by Aroostook Partnership.

CARING FOR THE CROWN



- Assisted WAGM with Aroostook 2020 series, looking at demographic challenges and opportunities.
- Briefed city and town councils and other organizations about findings in the “Caring for the Crown” report.

Helping Out



The Aroostook Partnership recently hired Trey Stewart of Presque Isle to serve as a special projects officer. Stewart works for the Partnership part-time, when he is not serving in the Maine Legislature. Stewart has been tasked with workforce development issues, education to industry data collection, coordination of Aroostook Day at the Legislature and other duties. Stewart received his MBA from the University of Maine in May of 2018, just before beginning work at the Partnership.

In the legislature, Stewart previously served on the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee in the 2017-2018 session as well as the state-wide Opioid Task Force. Stewart was recently elected minority whip for the upcoming legislative session for 2019-2020. Stewart is heavily involved in many civic organizations in Aroostook County including the Chamber of Commerce, the Presque Isle Rotary Club, the UMPI Board of Visitors, the NMCC Foundation Board and the ACAP Board of Directors.

Aroostook Partnership



VANGUARD AWARD — Lois Dickson of Tempo Employment receives the 2nd annual Vanguard Award at the AP Entrepreneur of the Year Banquet at Northern Maine Community College. Presenting the award to Dickson is former AP President and CEO Bob Dorsey.



EDUCATOR/BUSINESS SOCIALS — John Herweh of MMG, above, addresses educators gathered at the most recent educator/business social in Caribou. Representatives of schools in Caribou and Limestone were invited and the highlighted businesses were the Defense Finance Accounting Service in Limestone, MMG Insurance in Presque Isle, Porvair in Caribou, JD Irving and Katahdin Trust, which both have interests all over Aroostook County. Both the University of Maine at Presque Isle and Northern Maine Community College were represented as well. Below, Northern Light A.R. Gould Hospital President Greg LaFrancois addressed a similar gathering held at the University of Maine at Presque Isle.



BOD MEETING — University of Maine at Fort Kent President John Short addresses the Aroostook Partnership Board of Directors at a meeting in Fort Kent in July. The Board meets on an every other month basis with usually one meeting a year in the St. John Valley and one in the Houlton area. The other meetings are split between locations in Presque Isle and Caribou. The Executive Board made up the officers and a few others meets as needed throughout the year and decides on full board agendas and setting priorities.



Entrepreneur of the Year/Michelle Hanson

AROOSTOOK COUNTY— A Caribou restaurateur is the 2018 Aroostook Entrepreneur of the Year. Michelle Hanson of Frederick's Southside and Mascoto's restaurants received the award from the Aroostook Partnership at a banquet held at Northern Maine Community College Thursday, May 24.

Finishing as the first runner-up was Scott Nash and Alan Nash-Pelletier of Orchids restaurant in Madawaska and the second runner-up was Michelle Hersey of County

Environmental Engineering in Caribou.

Hanson received a plaque and \$1,000 award. Nash and Nash-Pelletier received a \$500 check and Hersey received \$250.

This is the second time in two years Hanson has been honored. In 2016, she was named the Small Business Administration Woman Owned Small Business of the year for Maine.

Hanson was already a successful entrepreneur with her Frederick's Southside restaurant, but according to Dave Spooner of Northern Maine Development Commission, who nominated her, "Hanson's entrepreneurial spirit outweighed the risk and she and her partner Scott Doody are helping to revitalize a section of the downtown."

The start-up venture is creating 12-15 part-time jobs in Caribou.

The other finalists were Pierre and Donna Dubay of Cove Corner Kennels; Paul Morgan of Dodo's

Market and Access 89 Pub; First Mile Brewery's Travis Jandreau, David Saucier, Travis Guy, Rod Lahren and Matt Deprey; Loryn Moran of House of Handsome, Interior Accent's Tina Boucher; Rick and Cassie Daigle of Too Far North Fitness; and Jim Bell of Wired Houlton.

Also, at the event, the second ever Vanguard Award, saluting an established entrepreneur who has contributed to economic development in Aroostook County, was presented to Lois Dickson of TEMPO

Employment. Dickson purchased TEMPO in 1996 after managing the company for four years. She has been instrumental in serving County business employment needs and employs about 400 employees every year. Many of her 'temporary' employees have found permanent jobs as a result of their experience working for TEMPO.

Previous 'Entrepreneur of the Year' winners include David Harbison of Bison Pumps in Houlton, Matt Bell of Northeast Pellets in Ashland, Northern Maine Distilling's Jessica Jewell and Scott Galbiati (formerly of Houlton), Troy Haney of Haney Building Specialties in Caribou, Corey LaPlante of Northern Prosthetics in Presque Isle, Josh McLaughlin of J. McLaughlin Construction in Houlton, the Buck Family of Mapleton for the Maine Malt House and last year's winner Josh Rich, of JL Rich Timber Harvesting in Fort Kent.



Michelle Hanson, right, accepts the 2018 Entrepreneur of the Year award from former Aroostook Partnership President and CEO Robert Dorsey.



AROOSTOOK
Partnership

Aroostook Partnership

PO Box 779

Caribou, ME 04736

Phone: 207-551-6601

www.aroostookpartnership.org