

**Blackstone**

Accelerates  
Growth

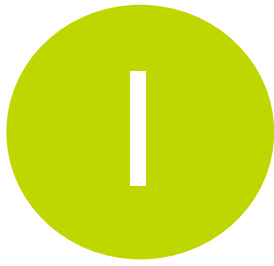
2015

**IMPACT  
REPORT**

BxG: “A Prosperous  
Maine through  
Entrepreneurship and  
Innovation”

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# Welcome

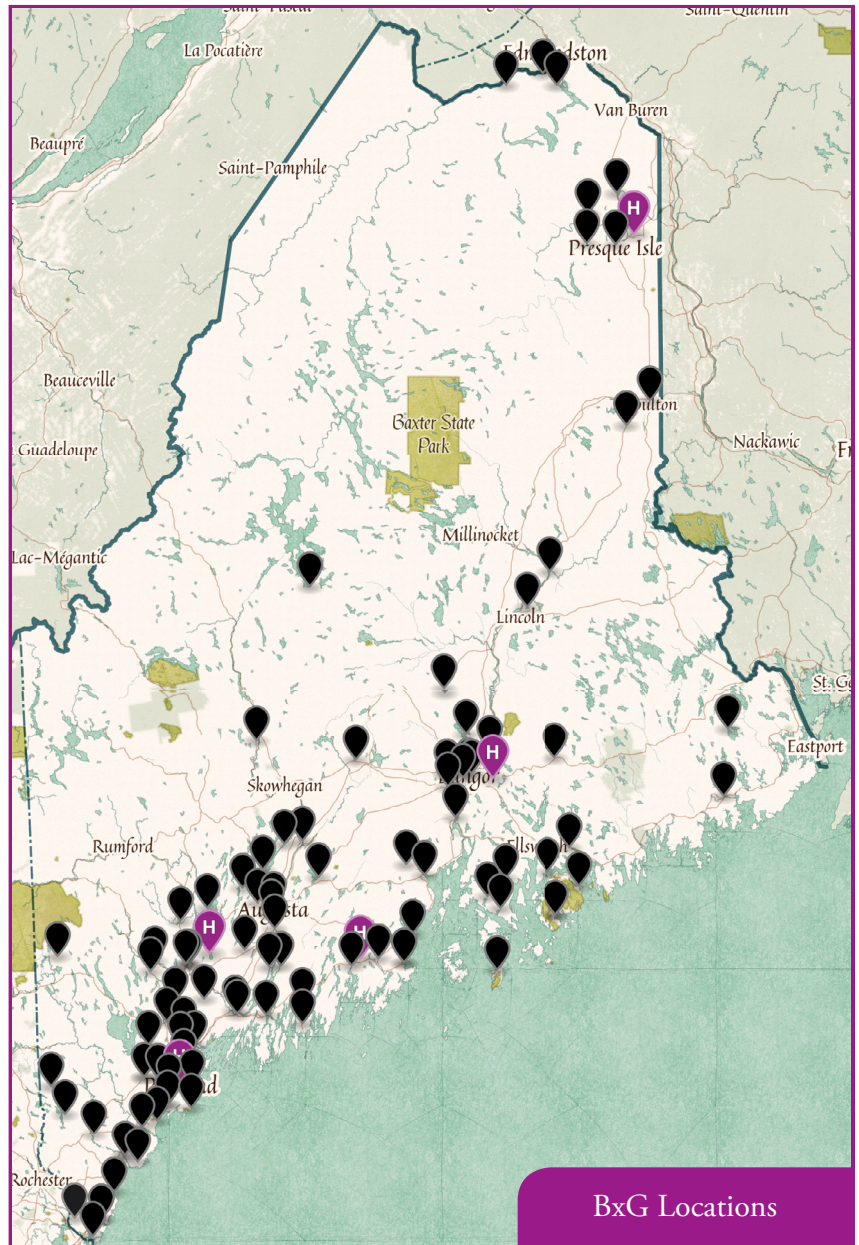
On behalf of the Maine Technology Institute and, indeed, the State of Maine, I want to commend the Blackstone Charitable Foundation for its transformative investment that is helping to grow entrepreneurship, innovation and the communities that surround them through the Blackstone Accelerates Growth (BxG) initiative. BxG's effect on Maine cannot be overstated and its stimulative impact continues to reverberate across our state.

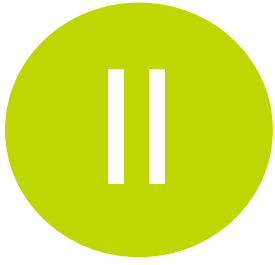
Through the Blackstone Charitable Foundation, BxG has connected Maine to the wider world to share ideas, to reach global markets and partner with investors to grow our innovative companies.

As you will see in this report, the partners of BxG have worked hard and collaboratively over the past almost four years to shape an initiative that builds an entrepreneurship community connecting Maine companies to mentoring, training and capital and helps them to grow and create new jobs, while at the same time inspiring our college students to pursue their passion for innovation and create new products, new services and new companies that will grow the innovation economy in Maine.

Finally, we are so proud of the entrepreneurs, innovators, investors and mentors in our state who together form the foundation of a stronger and more robust entrepreneurship community.

Brian Whitney  
President  
Maine Technology Institute





# Get to Know Our Community

## WHO WE ARE

**WE LOVE MAINE.** And we love Maine entrepreneurs and innovators. We know the work of starting, building and growing a successful company here can be messy and lonely work. And we know it is the key to Maine's economic future. The work of BxG to provide and connect high potential growth companies with the resources they need while surrounding them with a supportive community ensures that they thrive right here in Maine.

### OUR MISSION

To create a thriving ecosystem for entrepreneurship and innovation in Maine that provides and connects high potential growth companies to each other and the resources, talent and networks they need to prosper and transform our economy.

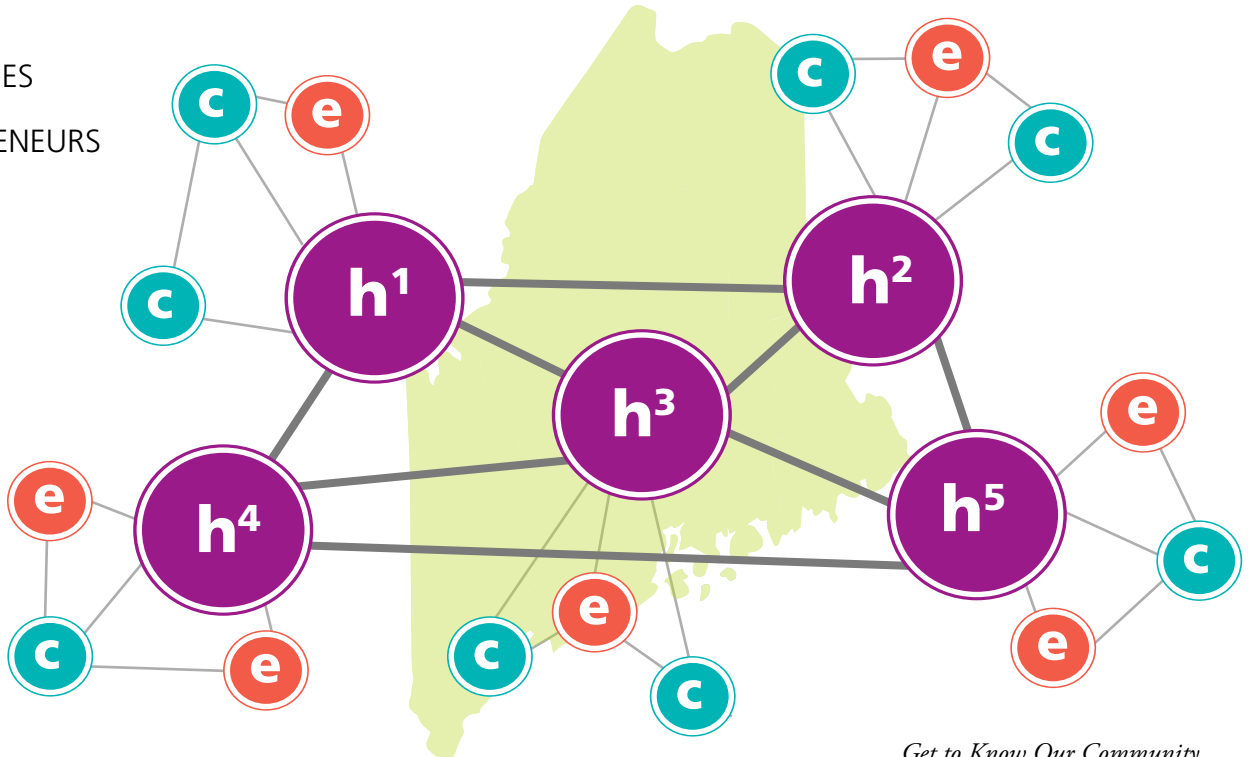
### THE HUBS

Our Innovation Hubs are virtual centers of activity connecting Maine entrepreneurs and companies with each other and to our resources. We have five active hubs built according to the needs unique to each locality. Each hub is a community where trust is built and networks are formed based on this trust, but managed as a group so each hub learns from the others.

**c** COMPANIES

**e** ENTREPRENEURS

**h** HUBS



## OUR DICTIONARY

“when we say this, we mean...”

**Entrepreneur:** An entrepreneur creatively solves a problem by building a product or service to generate revenue in spite of great risk. He or she aims high and takes chances, sees possibilities and targets markets beyond the local community.

**Innovator:** An innovator is a person or an organization who is one of the first to introduce into reality something better than before. He or she is always thinking, “there has to be a better way.”

**Scale:** Adding revenue at an exponential rate while expending resources at an incremental rate.

**Community:** A self-organized network of people united by a common desire to promote success beyond their own, who collaborate by sharing ideas, information, and other resources. The whole is greater than the sum of its parts, and is inherently anti-hierarchical and organic.

*“With the investment in Maine entrepreneurship and innovation from the Blackstone Charitable Foundation, BxG has done an impressive job helping Maine people launch their startups, grow their businesses and move our state’s economy forward. Several BxG initiatives are already yielding significant results here in the state – including the five regional innovation hubs that have assisted our entrepreneurs as they turn great ideas into viable businesses, and the matching services that have connected dozens of entrepreneurs with mentors and coaches across Maine. We need to be encouraging innovation and entrepreneurship around America, and I’m proud to have BxG leading that effort here in Maine.”*

SENATOR ANGUS KING

# MEET OUR COLLABORATORS

## THE BLACKSTONE CHARITABLE FOUNDATION

### **Blackstone** Charitable Foundation

Blackstone, based in New York, is one of the world's leading global investment and advisory firms with over \$333 billion total assets under management and more than 2,000 employees in 22 offices worldwide. The Blackstone Charitable Foundation was founded at the time of Blackstone's IPO in 2007 with substantial commitments from the firm's employees.

With entrepreneurship as one of the guiding principles at Blackstone, the Blackstone Charitable Foundation has identified, created, and replicated four distinct program models with the greatest potential to create high-growth businesses to ignite job growth. The Foundation's recognition that entrepreneurial activity is often the catalyst for successful growth and economic vitality in communities is the basis for its Entrepreneurship Initiative.

The Blackstone Charitable Foundation, through the creation of Blackstone Accelerates Growth, aims to lay the foundation for transformation of the Maine economy by accelerating the growth of high potential companies.

“We are looking for innovative projects and catalytic ideas that can contribute to the economic rebuilding of the nation through entrepreneurship – specifically in regions where talent is strong, ideas are abundant, and our capital can make a real difference spurring job growth.”

Stephen A. Schwarzman,  
Blackstone's Chairman  
and CEO



*Amy Stursberg, Blackstone Charitable Foundation Executive Director, at Bangor Hub Launch*

## INVESTING IN INNOVATION FOR A PROSPEROUS MAINE



MTI works with entrepreneurs, innovators, established businesses and institutions conducting research and development to fund, grow, and connect them to resources that will help them commercialize their technologies. Our programs help innovators accelerate progress to the market, leverage additional private and public investment, and ultimately, expand their economic impact in Maine.

MTI's investments aim to accelerate Maine technology-based businesses along the development cycle of bringing new products to market and to simultaneously accelerate these companies' potential for profitability and growth. MTI has helped fuel Maine's innovation economy, growing companies and good jobs across the state since 2000. In the past year alone, MTI awarded \$8.3 million in grants and loans to Maine companies that were ready to develop a new technology and bring it to market.

MTI was selected as the steward of the Blackstone Charitable Foundation grant and the home of Blackstone Accelerates Growth for its legacy of support for Maine's entrepreneurs and innovators and MTI has remained a lead collaborator in the BxG community. As BxG host, MTI provides administrative and programmatic staff support as well as access to the MTI entrepreneur-in-residence program for BxG companies.

Martha Bentley,  
BxG Program  
Manager at our 3rd  
Anniversary  
Celebration



“MTI’s continued commitment to leadership and support for BxG underscores our Board of Directors’ recognition that our portfolio companies cannot grow without a healthy ecosystem to help them access capital, talent and markets and surround them with the ingredients for success.”

James S. Ward IV,

On Behalf of MTI Board of Directors

## A LEADER IN INNOVATION



For 150 years, the University of Maine has had a leadership role in the state.

The University of Maine, founded in Orono in 1865, is the state’s premier public university. It currently enrolls 11,286 total undergraduate and graduate students who can directly participate in groundbreaking research working with world-class scholars. The University of Maine offers doctoral degrees in 35 fields, representing the humanities, sciences, engineering, and education; master’s degrees in roughly 70 disciplines; 90 undergraduate majors and academic programs; and one of the oldest and most prestigious honors programs in the U.S.

The University of Maine supports new and existing businesses. We link businesses and industry experts; provide research and commercialization support for new product development in companies; and help transfer university research and development into marketable products and services. Our work helps innovation across Maine grow, which creates future innovators and new jobs, and enhances the state economy.

The Foster Center at the UMaine was created in 2007 to help build a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship in the state, starting with our students. Since its founding, the Center’s staff has guided hundreds of students exploring innovative ideas and coached and trained more than 1000 business leaders throughout the state. Its Innovation Engineering program teaches students a systematic approach to developing innovations, whether they desire to be entrepreneurs or to innovate within existing organizations. The program, developed at UMaine, is now taught at seven other universities around the United States and Canada. The Center developed the Innovate for Maine program to connect talented students to innovative businesses, while helping companies bring new products to market faster and sparks activities in the Bangor Innovation Hub to build connections in its surrounding communities.

*“The Foster Center plays a leadership role in building a culture of innovation in the state. One of the most important ways we can do that is to help students see that they can do meaningful work, without having to leave the state. They have the talent and opportunity to start and help grow businesses in Maine.”*

Renee Kelly  
 Director, Economic Development  
 Initiatives & Foster Center for  
 Student Innovation



**118 COMPANIES RECEIVED ASSISTANCE FROM AN INNOVATE FOR MAINE FELLOW**



## A LEADER IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP



The Maine Center for Entrepreneurial Development (MCED) is a private non-profit founded in 1997 that assists entrepreneurs building scalable innovation based Maine businesses. With roots as a traditional incubator that offered entrepreneurs space located on an academic campus, MCED is now a leading edge virtual resource for

the most promising startups, regardless of their Maine location. Our particular strength is enabling non-debt financing through training, coaching, mentoring and connections.

MCED's growth and stability as an organization is in part due to its participation as a founding collaborator in Blackstone Accelerates Growth, where MCED Board, staff and mentors have collaborated to create an intentional community of growth through innovation. For more than 15 years the organization has accelerated the growth of hundreds of startups, and has been able to better scale through BxG by establishing the largest community of mentors in Maine, and offering the very best entrepreneurship training and advice.

MCED anchors the Portland Innovation hub and provides one-to-many style programs virtually across Maine, with more than 2000 people having attended MCED's workshops from across 14 Maine counties.



*“The BxG linkage of funding and collaboration has been transformational for MCED and our Top Gun program. Like the scalable companies we help, we have been able to scale ourselves, reaching 6x the number of entrepreneurs annually with 3x the partners and 3x the mentors on 2x the budget.”*

Don Gooding, Executive Director, MCED

# INNOVATION HUB HOSTS

## Midcoast Magnet, Camden, ME

"We're so thankful to have had this experience of working with BxG to enhance the midcoast's thriving entrepreneurial community. The partnership has strengthened and increased the programming we can offer to the community. We believe it has also resulted in a greater connection between the midcoast business community and statewide programs such as Top Gun and Maine Startup and Create Week and those connections will only continue to strengthen in future years."

Amanda Austin,  
Midcoast Magnet Board President

**MIDCOAST MAGNET** develops leaders in support of innovative projects that foster creativity, livability and economic vitality. We're a non-profit organization of people dedicated to vibrant culture, entrepreneurship, and social and professional networking.

Midcoast Magnet is a grassroots, all-volunteer group based around a central premise that the best job growth occurs where the creative types and innovators go. Communities like ours, with an extraordinary quality of place, can attract talented people and great jobs like never before. Midcoast Magnet hosts the BxG midcoast innovation hub providing a "creative class" point of view.

We identify and champion activities that have the greatest impact on the livability and sustainability of our community. Through the hub, midcoast activities include "Munchies and Mingling" casual networking events, The Hatchery, very early pipeline entrepreneurial education basics, and Business Showcases "PechaKucha Style."



**ENGINE** was founded on the belief that artistic expression and creative vibrancy are the gateway to cultural, social, and economic revitalization. Engine aspires to be a driver of artistic expression, creative industry, cultural vitality, community connections, and socially responsible practices. Its mission is to foster/integrate the arts and design, education, and sustainable creative entrepreneurialism as an explicit community value and civic priority in Biddeford. Connecting with greater York County efforts is integral to that mission.

Engine is not exclusive to art enthusiasts; we believe art should be inclusive, not exclusive. Engine hosts the York County innovation hub as the founder of "Innovate York County" – a grassroots movement to support innovators and entrepreneurs in the York county area. Through the hub, York County activities include entrepreneur roundtable breakfasts, Business Showcases "Powered by PechaKucha" storytelling events, and connecting events for York County "do-ers" to celebrate the entrepreneurial activity going on in the Biddeford area.

Unlike our other hubs, Engine is also a physical location that houses a FabLab and maker space, providing programming that supports innovation and its connection to art and creativity at the earliest stages, and always operating under the belief that commerce follows culture.

## Engine, Biddeford, ME

**THE LEWISTON AUBURN ECONOMIC GROWTH COUNCIL**, originally

established in 1981 with a mission to increase the tax base, increase local investment, and create good-paying jobs, is now the central economic development agency for the Lewiston Auburn metropolitan area.

The Growth Council works to expand business, providing technical assistance, commercial financing, site search assistance, marketing, and business consultation. LAEGC also seeks out new opportunities to encourage private investments, partnerships, and attract new business.

In 2016, LAEGC is spearheading the design and development of an Economic Growth Strategy to help continue the development of LAmaine into a community that fosters entrepreneurship, creativity, and innovation.



With LAmaine as a hub host, LAEGC is tapping into BxG expertise and statewide resources to help craft the local discussion in a new way and will serve the surrounding three county regions.

Lewiston Auburn Economic Growth Council, Lewiston, ME

“We will be Positive; We Will Collaborate; We Will Innovate and Try New Things; and We Will Celebrate Success and the Creation of Wealth.”

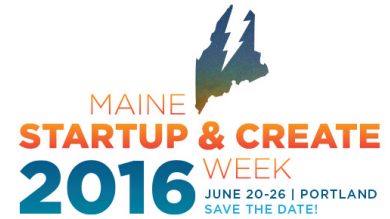
John Holden, Executive Director,  
Lewiston Auburn Economic Growth Council

## LEADERS IN THE HUBS

### **MAINE STARTUP AND CREATE WEEK - “A CONFERENCE WORTH SKIPPING WORK FOR”**

This is an annual week-long national conference in Portland, Maine celebrating innovators, entrepreneurs and startups.

MSCW showcases the vibrant, startup ecosystem in Maine and connects the growing community of people inspired by the entrepreneurial success and potential of the state with investors, innovators and founders from around the country. MSCW works to create “serendipitous collisions between people, ideas and resources.” This all-volunteer event in 2015 featured more than 70 events with 162 speakers, and more than 4100 community attendees from 27 states and Japan and Canada.



MSCW is a critical partner in building entrepreneurial community and culture in Maine, and BxG is a presenting sponsor of the event, sharing staff and providing financial resources for the effort. Launched to fill the critical “celebratory gap” in the ecosystem, MSCW has been and continues to be a most critical collaborator in celebrating Maine’s entrepreneurial capabilities and aspirations.



### **PELTONLABS: A COWORKING, SHARED OFFICE SPACE & INCUBATOR**

PelotonLabs is a coworking space providing space, connections, and resources for independent professionals and entrepreneurs who want to connect to a community, grow, and contribute through their work.

We specialize in encouraging growth and connections through events, peer consulting, and a collaborative culture. We also host Maine Startup Weekend, a global event model that brings together entrepreneurs, developers, and designers together for fun, fast-paced weekends of idea development, team building, and business launching.



The name Peloton (PEL-uh-TON) refers to the main group of riders during a cycling road race, where cyclists from different teams work together to move faster as a group. Our intention was to create a place for independent professionals to work together to accelerate the growth of our members and region. PelotonLabs founder, Liz Trice, has worked as a BxG hub manager, personally connecting entrepreneurs and creating a common calendar for entrepreneurial events through Startup Portland.

## MORE COMMUNITY BUILDERS

Part of building community is being open to new organizations and also to good ideas thought up elsewhere. The BxG hub movement includes embracing the best of these as signature events or partners.

**STARTUP PORTLAND** is a community of entrepreneurs, investors, technologists and creative misfits who love building scalable companies in Portland, Maine. We are led by a volunteer team and do three things: Host a website to connect you to companies, resources, workspaces and organizations in the city; Send an email newsletter to update you about news, events and opportunities for startup enthusiasts; Personally welcome and connect anyone who wants to learn more about Portland's awesome little startup scene.



**STARTUP BANGOR** is an emerging network among entrepreneurs and innovators. It's an ongoing conversation where you can ask, share, and help other startups. It's a resource for events, opportunities, and questions.



**HOUSE OF GENIUS** brings together entrepreneurs and a diverse mix of collaborators from the community each month for an evening of disruptive thinking, supportive input, and creative new ideas. You'll find Houses in many cities and countries around the world. House of Genius is continually growing based on grassroots demand. Together, we create Genius.



**BIG GIG** is a partnership between a motivated group of municipalities, universities, and organizations in Maine's Penobscot River Valley. We've been working with Startup Bangor to create a local network of innovators and entrepreneurs and bring positive change and economic growth. Big Gig focuses on a monthly free Big Gig event, which is in a different town or location each time. Folks network, drink, nosh on fresh appetizers, and enjoy a pitch-off between three innovators/entrepreneurs competing for a cash prize. Each Big Gig is preceded by a "Little Gig" where the team of experienced (but kind!) advisors encourage the pitchers, helps refine their trial presentations, and then select three of them to move on to the Big Gig the following week. The Big Gig is a partnership between the University of Maine, Husson University, and the towns of Orono and Old Town.





# The Initiative

## HOW IT WORKS

### Accelerating Companies, Next Generation and Connections

BxG efforts are centered on the concept of Innovation Hubs – virtual centers of innovation and activity connecting Maine entrepreneurs and companies with each other and the resources, talent, networks, skills and knowledge necessary to start, grow, and sustain successful enterprises. Each hub becomes a community where trust is built and networks are formed based on this trust. Also critical is the connection between the hubs. By managing the hubs as a group, each hub learns from the others. Through this model, Blackstone Accelerates Growth propels Companies, Connections and the Next Generation programs to support and change the economy.



BxG partners Don Gooding of MCED, Catherine Marin and Joe Migliaccio of MTI, and Renee Kelly of UMaine presenting the first BxG Partners in Growth Awards at the 3rd Anniversary Celebration in October 2014.

# THE HEART OF BxG

## CONNECTIONS AND CULTURE

### *Celebratory Events and Sharing*

BxG activities devised around building connections are intentional and deliberate. They are designed to strengthen networks, understand and find the critical “do-ers” in the community, and create a strong culture of risk-taking and celebration of success. This culture shift is critical if entrepreneurship is going to expand the rural Maine economy and if entrepreneurs are going to be surrounded by the support they need to succeed. The hub program is partially managed like a political organizing campaign in recognition that it is not enough to have a few successful entrepreneurs - we need a critical mass of startups getting the mentoring, access to expertise and support for the long haul.



BxG maintains an ongoing calendar of events that includes monthly networking events at the hubs, strategic showcase events organized by the BxG team, and sponsorship of events created by others. Events serve to introduce entrepreneurs to each other and to services, but more importantly, they allow the building of trust and networks that cross sector, or cluster boundaries. BxG has established a framework for selecting which events to sponsor and fund. This structure allows BxG to support nascent efforts and build community with others working within the ecosystem.

## TOP GUN PREP & TOP GUN VIRTUAL ACCELERATOR

### *Entrepreneurial Education and Acceleration*

BxG’s current suite of entrepreneurial educational programs was developed as a pipeline of support for entrepreneurial and innovative companies. Individual entrepreneurs or “wantrepreneurs” can begin with very basic education and move into venture establishment right through to preparation for financing. Companies participate in a variety of different support services and programs to move along the growth scale.

**MCEDOnlineU course pilot:** “Launch Your Brilliant Idea” is an affordable, online class specially designed to walk anyone through the “what’s next” of a brilliant idea. The course is designed for easy accessibility, with 25 online learning modules in ten minute segments that can be accessed on an as-time permits basis. The cost of the course is only \$50, which may later be applied to the full Top Gun Prep course offered in the fall. The class was crafted with an eye to transforming “wantrepreneur’s” into entrepreneurs and thus filling the large end of the funnel with plenty of good ideas enabled by early entrepreneurial education.

**Top Gun Prep:** This program, open to any entrepreneur in Maine, and offered statewide on a virtual platform, is an intensive eight-week online course that teaches the fundamentals of entrepreneurship, innovation, finance, and marketing. The program is offered annually, with scholarships provided to individuals in rural settings from their local Economic Development District agency. Top Gun Prep is coordinated and led by MCED, with curriculum input from the University of Maine’s innovation programs. Top Gun Prep was developed to pull together elements of some of the best entrepreneurial educational models, like the Lean Startup, to help very early stage entrepreneurs understand different business models and financing options, as well as to make sure that all entrepreneurs selected for Top Gun have the basic background needed to launch a business successfully and get all they can from the Top Gun experience.

**Top Gun:** This exclusive entrepreneurial development program focuses on mentor assistance and higher level business development needs for a class of about 30 ventures annually who must apply for acceptance, with completion of Top Gun Prep as a prerequisite. Currently offered in the Portland, Bangor, and Midcoast Hubs, the program is tailored to the entrepreneurial ecosystem of each region and is refined annually based on the learnings from the previous year’s cohort. Top Gun uses an online application and a rigorous review process for selecting each class. Top Gun is coordinated by MCED with teams on the ground in Bangor and Rockland. Each hub provides mentors and volunteer leaders and MTI provides participants and mentors. Top Gun’s once-a-week for five months curriculum culminates in a regional showcase pitch contest, the winners of which compete at the statewide showcase pitch contest and demo day, which historically draws more than 250 attendees.



Top Gun entrepreneurs, John Rooks and Justin Jaffe of Rapport, took home the \$10,000 first prize from the 2015 Top Gun Showcase.

curriculum culminates in a regional showcase pitch contest, the winners of which compete at the statewide showcase pitch contest and demo day, which historically draws more than 250 attendees.



## INNOVATE FOR MAINE FELLOWS

*Cultivating Maine's Next Generation of Talent*

To help meet Maine's need to attract and maintain talent, BxG established a program to introduce talented students to both the tools of Innovation Engineering, as well as to innovative and high growth potential companies. BxG has multiple goals with the Next Generation program – changing perceptions and attitudes towards employment in Maine, and connecting potential talent to Maine companies who need it. Each summer's cohort of students starts the experience with a "boot camp" that provides a short course in Innovation Engineering and other innovation resources. BxG builds a community for the interns with events throughout the summer and school year, and includes them in all hub activities.

UMaine has run the IFM program for four summers with a number of internships also available year-round on a project basis to select Maine companies. The program is open to any student with a Maine connection and is broadly promoted by all BxG partners who also participate in the selection committee to review applications to match selected students with selected companies. BxG provides the funding necessary to compensate these interns for their work, and they are University employees, a personnel arrangement greatly beneficial to the participating companies.

The program has been successful in meeting both of its broad goals, but has been especially pivotal for participating companies ready to scale. In these cases, it has given the companies much needed talent at a bargain rate and also has allowed them to "try before they buy" new hires. In many cases, program graduates have gone on to become critical team members in their host startup.

### "DOUBLING DOWN"

*Support of Accelerated Ventures from three statewide organizations*

As companies move along the growth scale and through the entrepreneurial education opportunities, MTI's suite of funding opportunities helps these entrepreneurs access team-building resources such as TechStart grants for developing business models, market analysis and customer discovery activities, and Business Accelerator Grants to build critical operational capacity such as human resource, IT, and financial reporting and accounting systems. The BxG collaboration allows project partners to "double down" on entrepreneurial teams and give them a variety of simultaneous supports.



VICTORIA FENG

"THE ENTIRE EXPERIENCE PROVIDED ME WITH A **SELF-FULFILLMENT** I HAD NEVER HAD WITH MY PREVIOUS EMPLOYERS, AND INSPIRED ME TO **NEVER SETTLE** FOR JUST ANOTHER ROUTINE JOB."

INNOVATE FOR MAINE FELLOW

## WHY IT WORKS

*It's not just the idea; it's the attitude.*

Maine is defined by its geography- 1.3 million people spread over 30,800 square miles. To get at critical mass, programming and the ecosystem must be statewide and connected.

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98% OF PRIVATE ENTERPRISES IN MAINE ARE SMALL BUSINESSES WITH FEWER THAN 100 EMPLOYEES, BUT "SMALL BUSINESS OWNER" IS NOT SYNONYMOUS WITH ENTREPRENEUR.

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Maine has a strong brand based on its natural beauty and resources, but Maine has fewer corporate and public R&D centers than states with higher population densities. Maine must highly leverage the resources it has to transition its natural resource based economy for the 21st Century.

Blackstone Accelerates Growth focused resources on the entrepreneurs and innovators with the mindset and model of aiming high - companies being built around scalable innovations and business models by entrepreneurs of the "relentless seek-and-solve breed."

BxG accelerates enterprises focus on growth and on markets outside Maine. They are those companies with a strong economic impact multiplier effects. BxG also seeks to grow this cohort by building a community and changing the culture to better nurture this breed.

Maine's entrepreneurs and innovators are spread out and often isolated. They work within a culture that prides itself on self-reliance and humility, and one that is also risk-averse.

Just as the educational attainment of the parents is a major factor in the educational success of a child, the environment in which an entrepreneur grows an enterprise is similarly indicative. Access to entrepreneurs and mentors who have gone before, and peers currently sharing similar experiences, is critical to the success and growth of both the entrepreneur and the enterprise. While Maine has many successful small businesses, it has a much smaller community of highly successful larger ventures, and few highly celebrated exits. BxG aims to change this dynamic.

*"Having seen first the organization of the entrepreneurship model in Maine and surrounding ecosystem Microsoft is pleased to be able to play its part in a fast evolving culture of innovation ... From high school through college to the startup ... Maine has it all. More importantly there's a great sense of regional collaboration, which encourages action and idea development."*

Steve Ramsey, Microsoft

# OUR BEGINNING, OUR GROWTH, OUR FUTURE

## OUR BEGINNING

**November 2011** – Blackstone Charitable Foundation launches Blackstone Accelerates Growth as a model for accelerating growth in a rural state with a \$3 million three-year commitment. MTI selected to be the Blackstone Accelerates Growth host, with Maine Center for Entrepreneurial Development and the University of Maine as partners. Blackstone Accelerates Growth is BAG.

**Spring 2012** – BAG steering committee is formed and BAG hires an Executive Director; Top Gun expands from a pilot in Portland to a second location in Bangor; a first cohort of Innovation Engineering scholarships are offered at University of Maine campuses; BAG offers office hours in Bangor and Portland innovation hubs.

**Summer 2012** – first cohort of Innovate for Maine Fellows placed in innovative companies

## OUR GROWTH

**Fall 2012** –Top Gun Prep premieres as new program delivered in eight interactive weekly webinars for “wantrepreneurs” to become entrepreneurs. Northern Maine Development Commission offers scholarships for northern Maine participants. Bangor Hub hosts the BigGig. First five “Blackstone Spotlight Companies” named.

**Spring 2013** – Blackstone Accelerates Growth does an organizational pivot. BAG becomes BxG. BxG more closely aligns with MTI and adopts a dispersive, collaborative leadership model. Top Gun graduates its second bi-location class.

**Summer 2013** – Spotlight Companies become Accelerated Ventures; Innovate for Maine Fellow program expands to 30 fellows placed in companies around the State.

**Fall 2013** – Top Gun Prep premieres as new program delivered in eight interactive weekly webinars for “wantrepreneurs” to be able to become entrepreneurs. Midcoast Innovation Hub forms in partnership with Midcoast Magnet. Business Showcase PechaKucha style premieres on midcoast. Portland hosts its first Startup Weekend.

**Spring 2014** – BxG adds a statewide hub coordinator. Top Gun has largest class yet. Innovate for Maine Fellows available year-round on a project basis to innovative companies through the University of Maine. Accelerated Ventures portfolio grows to 10 companies.



**Summer 2014** – Maine Startup and Create Week premiers with over 3,000 people attending events in the Portland hub. Innovate for Maine Fellow program places 54 fellows in innovative companies in two cohorts around the Bangor and Portland hubs.

**Fall 2014** – Top Gun Prep adds gathering spots in each hub for participants to work together. BxG celebrates its third anniversary with “Partners in Growth Awards” given to Wex, Idexx, Eaton Peabody and Whole Foods. Midcoast Magnet hosts Juice 4.0 conference in midcoast hub. *Popular Mechanics* names Portland #4 among “startup cities.”

**Spring 2015** – Top Gun expands into midcoast hub, graduates largest class to date with 30 participating companies and three regional events culminating in a final Showcase event with a \$10,000 prize winner. York County and Lewiston Auburn hubs form in partnership with Engine and Lewiston Auburn Economic Growth Council. Accelerated Ventures program reaches its portfolio goal of 20 companies.

**Summer 2015** – Second Maine Startup and Create Week succeeds with 10,350 volunteer hours logged and 4100 attendees. “Launch Your Brilliant Idea” is added as an early pipeline offering as an affordable, online class specially designed to walk prospective entrepreneurs through the “what’s next” of a brilliant idea. Greenlight Maine is launched and Steve Case selects Portland as a “Rise of the Rest Tour” stop. BxG team employs Maine Law School Entrepreneurship Fellow to lead visioning process for transition from Blackstone Accelerates Growth to Maine Accelerates Growth.

**OUR FUTURE**

**Fall 2015** – Blackstone Accelerates Growth transitions to Maine Accelerates Growth (MxG) with the transition from Blackstone Charitable Foundation investment to Maine-based support. The Maine Accelerates Growth Fund is established at the Maine Community Foundation with a challenge grant of \$200,000 from MTI. Maine Accelerates Growth adds Our Katahdin and Greenlight Maine as collaborative partners.



Maine Accelerates Growth operationalizes the BxG values of collaboration and “co-opetition” with adoption of the vision statement.

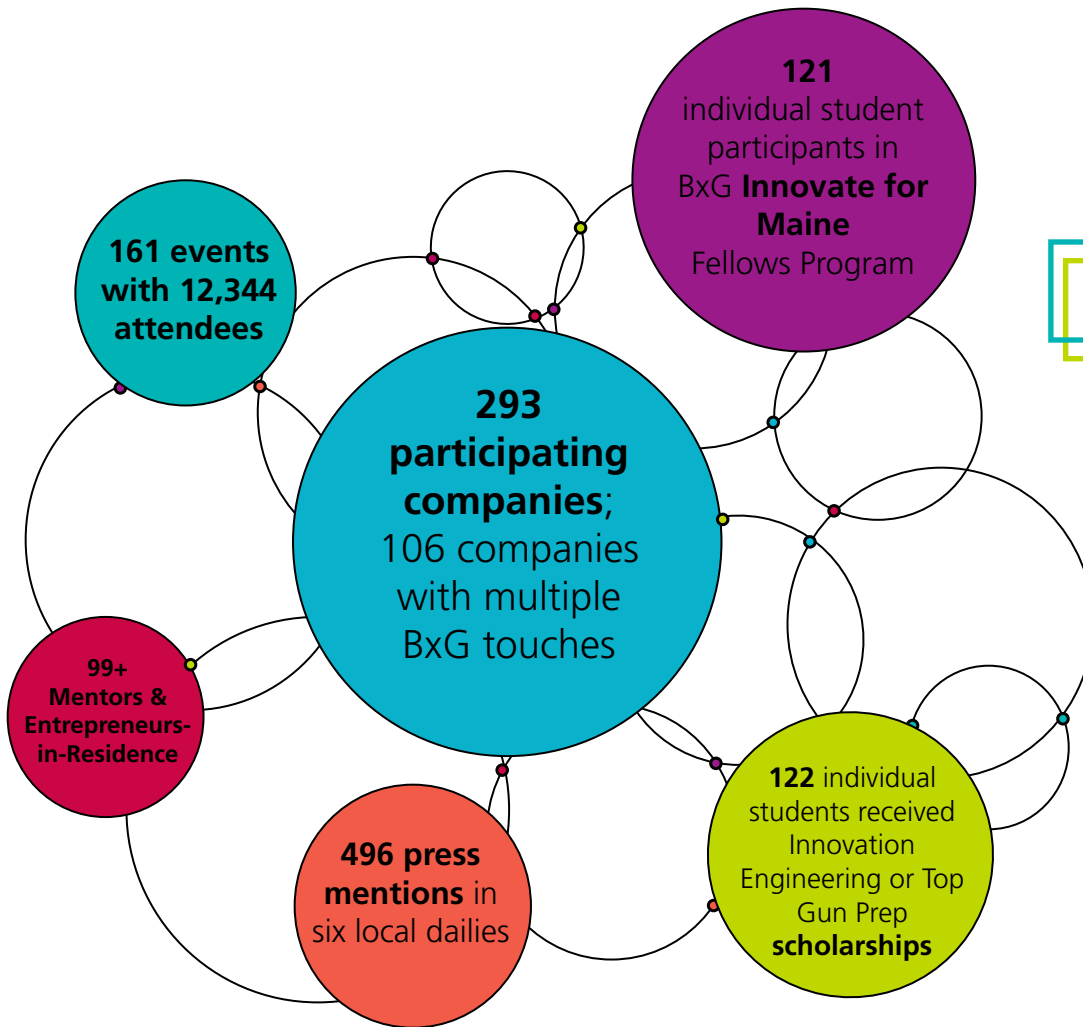


“We work together to accelerate the growth of companies, communities, and talent by funding, creating, and leveraging high impact entrepreneurship and innovation programs and events through a collaborative and complementary network of organizations and individuals in order to propel economic prosperity in Maine.

We study emerging best practices to continuously improve our approach to creating an extraordinary future for Maine.”

# IV

## Our Story



### BY THE NUMBERS

#### BXG COMPANY METRICS

- 12% average annual revenue growth, 4X the % increase in Maine's gross domestic product over the same time period
- 8% increase in employment, compared to <1% statewide
- 14% increase in compensation per FTE, compared to <2% increased compensation statewide
- Total investment increased by 27%
- 78% of Top Gun graduates still in business

# BY THE PEOPLE

## ENTREPRENEUR PROFILE

### BEN POLITO, CEO, PIKA ENERGY

Ben Polito has been building clean energy technology since his high school days on an island farm in Maine, beyond the reach of grid power. He was the lead mechanical engineer on the team that developed the groundbreaking Skystream small wind turbine.

Prior to launching Pika Energy, Ben built the east coast office of GreenMountain Engineering, a design consulting firm serving clean technology startups, and served on the founding team of 1366 Technologies, where he developed texturing methods for high-efficiency silicon solar cells.



Ben holds patents and patents-pending on technology ranging from implantable medical devices to algae biofuels to solar cells. He earned a mechanical engineering degree from MIT, where he developed 3D printers, built autonomous submarines, and worked on E Ink, the display technology of the Amazon Kindle.

*“We plan to stay active in the BxG family. Not only do we want to continue networking with the industry experts Maine has to offer, we also want to pass along what we learn to other start-ups and help BxG sustain its success with the next generation of young companies.”*

*Ben Polito, Pika Energy CEO*

For three years, Ben and his Pika Energy co-founder Joshua Kauffman were developing breakthrough wind turbine technology in Ben’s basement.

In January 2012, they started Top Gun. By June they were selected as a BxG Accelerated Venture, pitching to the Maine Angels, and by summer 2013 their third Innovate for Maine fellow was working with them in their new manufacturing space due to \$1M in angel funding, \$500,000 in total funding from Maine Technology Institute, winning \$30,000 in the GSB Launchpad event and another \$30,000 from the New England Clean Energy Council.

**Pika Energy has just completed the installation of the nation’s first integrated wind-solar system** installed at a public school that delivers clean energy and smart grid management in Ravenna, Nebraska.

Ben is one of our “boomerang entrepreneurs.” He grew up in Maine, went to work elsewhere, and then brought his business ideas back to where he wanted to live. It is entrepreneurs like Ben who are changing the culture in our innovation hubs.

## FELLOW PROFILE

### BROCK CASSIDY, CLASS OF 2013



When Brock Cassidy, now a graduate at Bowdoin College, was 10 years old he collected discarded sticks from beaver dams in the Maine woods, transformed them into walking sticks, and sold them at craft fairs. This endeavor marked his first entrepreneurial experience but not his last.

“By the time I got to Bowdoin I helped start our school's first entrepreneurship club and have had a hard time understanding the aversion most of my peers have with trying to build something and create jobs/internships themselves,” Cassidy says.

It was this spirit that helped him earn a position as **a fellow in the Blackstone Accelerates Growth Innovate for Maine fellowship program** two years ago. The fellowship further exposed Cassidy to Maine's entrepreneurial ecosystem, where he learned about exciting startup companies, and connected with entrepreneurs at events like Startup Weekend. At Portland's Startup Weekend last June, he was one of 50 people who pitched a business idea. Cassidy's idea was one of 15 selected projects for the weekend, and his team went on to become one of the three finalists. In just three days, Cassidy's team formed Day With a Local, a Maine company that pairs tourists with local guides for unique Maine experiences.

Cassidy hasn't slowed down since. Earlier this year he applied--and was recently selected--to participate in “Venture for America (VFA),” a two-year fellowship program that immerses recent college graduates in the “trenches of a startup in an emerging city, where they learn how to build a business while making an impact.”

When asked if the “Innovate for Maine” fellowship had any impact on his application and acceptance into the “Venture for America” program, Cassidy said, “I spoke about the ‘Innovate for Maine’ program in a few of my interviews to indicate that I understood what working in the startup world would actually look like. I also spoke at length about my long relationship working with the Maine Technology Institute and all the opportunities I have been given there since Innovate for Maine paired us together.”

The “Venture for America” program is not an obvious path out of Bowdoin, and no previous student had ever pursued the opportunity before, so Cassidy conducted significant research on VFA on his own. He was motivated by his desire to work at a high-growth startup after graduation. Now that he's been accepted, he's excited to participate in VFA because he'll be exposed to a lot of startup options, as well as belong to a class of high potential young entrepreneurs. “Many of the fellows from previous years have already started ventures together and there is a lot of opportunity for training, mentoring, and even funding for a fellow's venture at the end of the two-year commitment,” Cassidy says.

Cassidy has strong ties to Maine, and anticipates he always will. “The untapped beauty of this state makes me incredibly happy any time I step outside, from my family's cabin in northern Maine, to the mountains in western Maine, to the coast where I have attended school...It seems strange to be preparing to leave Maine, because all VFA cities are much bigger than any in Maine (1-3 million people), but I will definitely be back regularly and see myself coming back here to build new companies after I conclude this program.”

## ENTREPRENEUR PROFILE

### KATE MCALEER, CEO, BIXBY & CO

Kate McAleer founded Bixby & Co after moving from New York to midcoast Maine to re-invent the chocolate bar. Kate represents a new breed of young entrepreneurs who are breaking with the traditional career path. They possess a renewed American spirit that drives them to create new businesses that are socially responsible while incredibly supportive of local communities. Kate's life experiences have shaped every aspect of Bixby chocolate. The greatest inspiration for her recipes has been her strong, intimate relationships with family and community in addition to an active, health-conscious lifestyle.

The Bixby name comes from her great-great grandparents, Lillian and William K. Bixby, who worked very hard to achieve the "American Dream." They lived an adventurous life with incredible devotion and commitment to family as well as community in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. That same adventurous spirit led Kate to expand her horizons by spending her last two years of high school studying abroad in France and China. She lived with host families and became immersed in their cultures. The travel abroad opened her heart to exotic cuisines and spices which inspire her creative recipes. After graduating from New York University and completing her graduate work at Parsons/Cooper Hewitt, Kate pursued her passion of combining cultural history with the culinary arts. She earned diplomas in pastry arts and culinary management from the Institute of Culinary Education (ICE), Manhattan and certificates from Ecole Chocolate, Vancouver.

Kate followed her parents' move to midcoast Maine, and tapped the Blackstone Accelerates Growth community to grow her company. Success has followed: Bixby & Co was accepted into Whole Foods' program to support food entrepreneurs, won \$30,000 at the Gorham Savings Bank LaunchPad competition, and opened her own manufacturing plant in Rockland. Kate has won numerous awards including the SBA's Young Entrepreneur Award. Bixby & Co is one of 14 businesses in Maine certified as women owned.

*"The business climate in Maine has been very supportive and nurturing for a young entrepreneur such as myself. Top Gun Prep followed by Top Gun provided point on education in the midst of expanding our business. Moreover, the mentoring from highly seasoned professionals, which still continues today, has been extremely helpful for me as we navigate the complexities of start-up and growth."*

Kate McAleer, CEO, Bixby & Co





## FELLOW PROFILE

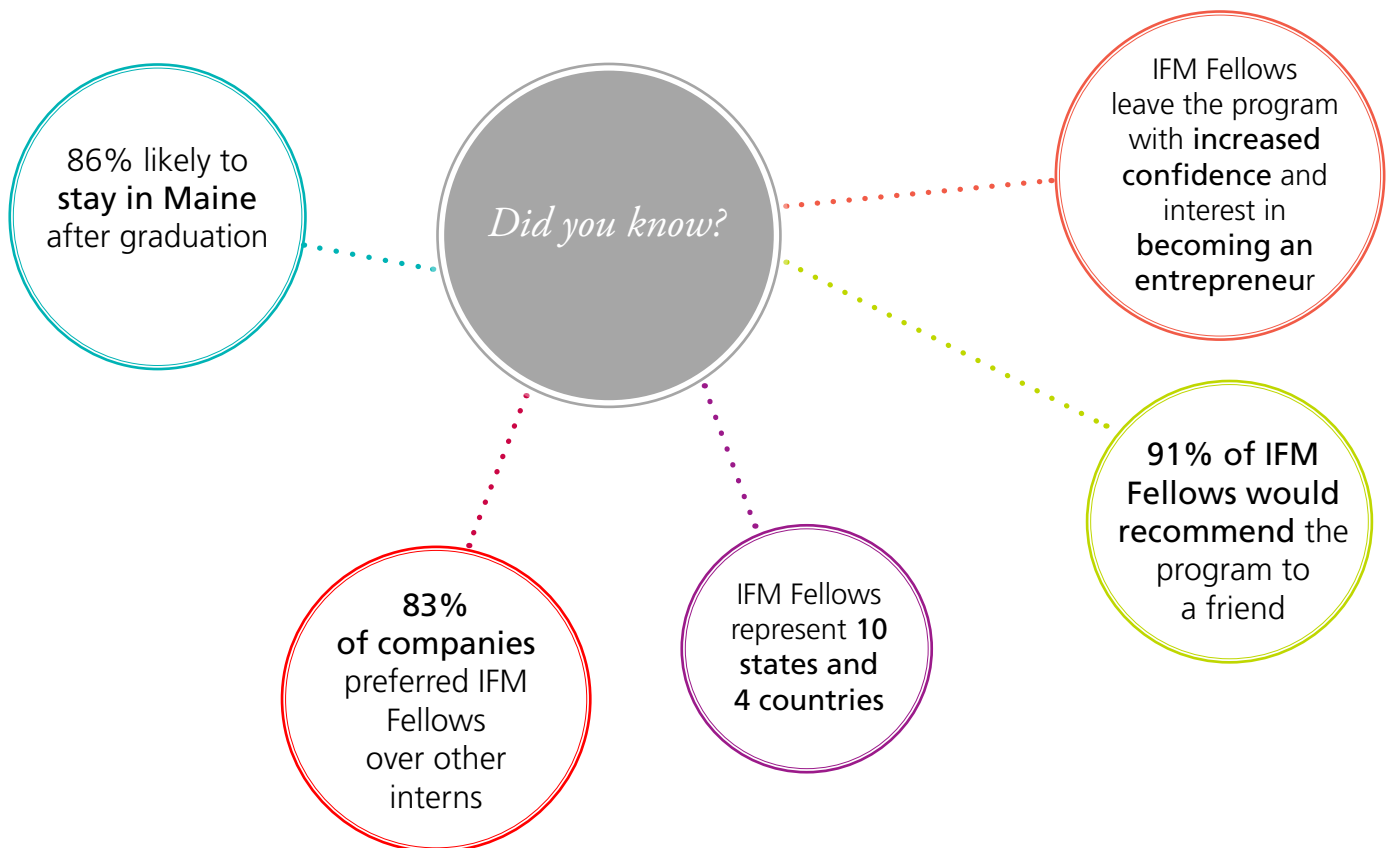
### TONY NUZZO, CLASS OF 2012

Tony Nuzzo, an electrical engineering student at the University of Maine from Litchfield, Maine, was one of the students in the first cohort of the Innovate for Maine program in 2012. He was matched with start-up company PIKA Energy in Westbrook, Maine, which focuses on wind and solar energy technology, including scalable options for homeowners and small businesses.



A graduate of the Maine School of Science and Mathematics, Tony had an interest in wind turbines and did such great work for the company that he was hired as a full-time employee the following year, after he graduated. Since then, Tony has continued to demonstrate his talent and was recently promoted to lead the Quality/Customer Experience Department at PIKA.

Ben Polito, PIKA's president, explained the value of the Innovate for Maine program to his company: "We have had interns each summer since the start of the program. We build highly technical products that require specific skills, and the intern program is a great way to get to know innovative young people and learn if there is a fit." In fact, in addition to Tony, PIKA has since hired two additional Fellows for full-time positions with the company.



## HUB CHAMPIONS

### TAMMY ACKERMAN, BIDDEFORD, ME

A native of South Dakota and with a fitting pioneering spirit, Tammy Ackerman has been leading the revitalization of Biddeford, a former mill town by supporting creative placemaking, first in her previous role as board member and then director of the Heart of Biddeford, and for the past six years as the co-founder and Executive Director of Engine, a community arts organization.

**engine**

PROPELLING THE CREATIVE COMMUNITY

In 2012, Ackerman gave Maine FabLab, an MIT-affiliated, community-based digital fabrication facility, a home and has been working to establish the FabLab as a place that is social in nature and focused on teaching anyone to make “almost” anything. Ackerman believes that end-user digital fabrication happening in prototyping labs and makerspaces throughout the world is a big part of the next industrial revolution.

Helping her own town shift its paradigm from a run-down Company Town to a town of companies is a core tenet of Engine’s and Maine FabLab’s mission. Ackerman lives in a renovated mill building along the Saco River within walking distance of downtown Biddeford.



Tammy Ackerman,  
Executive Director  
Engine

"I'm a strong believer in being master of one's own destiny. I had no previous experience in launching a non-profit, let alone be its executive director, but I did it and we've affected change in our community. 'Doing' is such an important part of being an entrepreneur. Doing. Failing. Doing it better. Repeat. And, connecting the creative world with the entrepreneurial world to allow innovation to happen inspires me."

## OUR FELLOWS

*Class of 2012*



Alexandra Lynds - Hermon, ME  
 Axl Wallingford - Tremont, ME  
 Ben Brennan - Freeport, ME  
 Chad Paradis - Old Town, ME  
 Derek Jones - Hampden, ME  
 Eric Plourde - Gorham, ME  
 John Collette - Lewiston, ME  
 Kurt Eyerer - Newburgh, ME  
 Lindsay Heald - Litchfield, ME  
 Matthew A Cartmell - Freeport, ME  
 Michael Brown - Old Town, ME  
 Michael Lachance - Manchester, ME  
 Patrick Church - Lancaster, NH  
 Robert Mooney - Durham, ME  
 Samuel Albert - Fort Kent, ME  
 Scott Alexander - Brunswick, ME  
 Shawn Staples - Readfield, ME  
 Tony Nuzzo - Litchfield, ME  
 Victoria Feng - New York, NY  
 Virginia Lopez-Anido - Orono, ME

*Class of 2013*



Alden Porter - South Portland, ME  
 Austin Guyette - Eden Prairie, MN  
 Brock Cassidy - Presque Isle, ME  
 Brice O'Connor - Londonderry, NH  
 Caitlin Smith - Hampden, ME  
 Elija Bates - Winterport, ME  
 Ethan Gehab - Cumberland, ME  
 Ana Leira - Plasencia, Caceres (Spain)  
 Virginia Lopez-Anido - Orono, ME  
 James Gullbrand - Portland, ME

James Adley - Embden, ME  
 Jeremy Niles - Belfast, ME  
 John Wilson - Hampden, ME  
 Jon Swavelly - Reading, PA  
 Jordan Nickerson - Brewer, ME  
 Katie Smith - Gorham, ME  
 Liam Swords - Scarborough, ME  
 Michael Cochrane - Waldo, ME  
 Noah Finberg - Portland, ME  
 Rory McGuire - South China, ME

Samuel Albert - Fort Kent, ME  
 Sarah Harrington - Orono, ME  
 Shawn Staples - Readfield, ME  
 Tim Blier - Bangor, ME  
 Trisha Bakeman - Brooksville, ME  
 Victoria Feng - New York, NY  
 Young Min Cha - Seoul, South Korea

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Adam Mullen - Brewer, ME  
 Andrew Holt - Orono, ME  
 Carmin Pacileo - Oakland, ME  
 Christine Le - Hanoi, Vietnam  
 Christopher Abbott - Northfield, MN  
 Cole Richards - Presque Isle, ME  
 Courtney Norman - Montreal, Quebec  
 Emma Wilson - Greenville, ME  
 Eva Manandhar - Orono, ME  
 Isabella O'Bryon - Hallowell, ME  
 Jacob Pelkey - Mattamiscotis, ME  
 James Barry - Bangor, ME  
 John Wilson - Hampden, ME  
 Lauren Conner - Townsend, MA  
 Logan Good - Mapleton, ME  
 Margaret Bouchard - Topsham, ME  
 Matthew Bullard - Alfred, ME  
 Matthew Twist - Belgrade, ME  
 Maxwell Alley - Briarcliff Manor, NY  
 Sarah Bishop - Orono, ME  
 Silvia Guzman - Santo Domingo, DO  
 Thomas Bearor - Bangor, ME  
 Wendelin Choiniere - Exeter, NH

Class of 2014



Class of 2014



Alden Porter - South Portland, ME  
 Alexandria Valente - Windham, ME  
 Charles Haritos - Kennebunk, ME  
 Christian Houston-Floyd Hong-Kong  
 Christopher Pickles - Marion, MA  
 Cooper FitzGerald - Camden, ME  
 Dana Hopkins - Social Circle, GA  
 Emma Sapat - Falmouth, ME  
 Gabriel Warren - Edgecomb, ME  
 Jacob Spertus - Kansas City, MO  
 Jeremy Niles - Belfast, ME  
 John Peters - Lewiston, ME  
 Joseph Long - Cape Elizabeth, ME  
 Kristopher Reed - Topsham, ME  
 Lance Doiron - Shapleigh, ME  
 Lydia Larson - New Gloucester, ME  
 MacKenzie Sullivan - Lewiston, ME  
 Michael Yang - Seoul, South Korea  
 Michael Schuman - Topsham, ME  
 Nathan Finberg - Portland, ME  
 Neal Lofgren - Kittery Point, ME  
 Nico Catano - York, ME  
 Nicole Messerman - Brunswick, ME  
 Ruth Hawley - Poulsbo, WA  
 Ryan Davis - Wichita Falls, TX  
 Sydney Kolysher - White Rock, Canada  
 Thomas Dean - Portland, ME  
 William Lones - North Yarmouth, ME

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*Class of 2015*



- Amir Musavi - Orono, ME
- Austin Dow-Smith - St. Agatha, ME
- Avery Cole - Orono, ME
- Bradford Carpentier - Kennebunk, ME
- Cody Blier - Bangor, ME
- Connor Perry - Hampden, ME
- Courtney Norman - Montreal, Quebec
- Crystal Cooper - South Portland, ME
- Eleanor Pryor - Waterville, ME
- Elliott Simpson - Winterport, ME
- Fuoad Saliou-Sulley - Kennebunkport, ME
- James Barker - Turner, ME
- Jason Myers - Southington, CT
- John Peters - Lewiston, ME
- Joshua Couturier - Belfast, ME
- John Peters - Lewiston, ME
- Julia Butler - Yarmouth, ME
- Justin Bearce - Hampden, ME
- Justin Cary - Cape Elizabeth, ME
- Kimberly Ha - Bronx, NY
- Kristopher Reed - Topsham, ME
- Logan Good - Mapleton, ME
- Luke Rector - Rockland, ME
- Lydia Larson - New Gloucester, ME
- Matthew Bullard - Alfred, ME
- Matthew Hodgkin - Colebrook, CT
- Matthew Shultz - Newton, MA
- Michael Kennedy - Portland, ME
- Molly Desmarais - Kennebunk, ME
- Nicolette Hashey - Hermon, Maine
- Paul Hansen - Cape Elizabeth, ME
- Sabrina Vivian - Orono, ME
- Samuel Jordan - Hampden, ME
- Sierra Curtis - Waldoboro, ME
- Taylor Hall - Warren, ME
- Thomas Freeman - Topsham, ME
- Tyler Cyr - Hallowell, ME



## OUR TEAM

*“Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is success.” - Henry Ford*

### MARTHA BENTLEY

Program and Operations Manager, Blackstone Accelerates Growth



Martha Bentley has been Program and Operations Manager of Blackstone Accelerates Growth since March 2013. She has worked with the Maine Technology Institute in a variety of capacities since 2002, currently also managing the Cluster Initiative Program and the Maine Technology Asset Fund. In addition to her work with MTI, Martha manages the Big White Barn, LLC.

Martha received her B.A. from Davidson College cum laude with honors in history, and her M.A. from the University of South Carolina. She has held a variety of positions relating to non-profit management and philanthropy, including grants manager for the Public Welfare Foundation in Washington, DC, and director of programs at the Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation in Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

### EMILY CORDRAY

Finance Manager, Maine Technology Institute

Emily Cordray began working with MTI in January 2015, overseeing the financial, accounting, HR, and general administrative functions. A native of Wyoming, Emily earned a B.A. in Accounting from the University of Wyoming. She began her career as a staff accountant with Ernst & Young in Denver, Colorado. A former C.P.A. certified in 1992, Emily worked with a number of nonprofit organizations during her time in public accounting.



Prior to joining the MTI team, Emily served as the Finance Director at Biodiversity Research Institute in Portland; the Principal Financial Officer of the Portland, Maine Police Department; and the Communications and Volunteer Coordinator for MSAD 51.

### DON GOODING

Executive Director, Maine Center for Entrepreneurial Development



Don Gooding has been Executive Director of the Maine Center for Entrepreneurial Development since October 2010. He is also Vice Chair of the Maine Angels and has taught or spoken about innovation and entrepreneurship at University of Southern Maine, University of Maine, Southern Maine Community College, University of New England and Colby College. Previously he was a telecommunications market analyst and venture capitalist for fifteen years, and founded and ran a global specialty music business, Don has invested as an angel since the late 1990s.

As Research Partner for Accel Partners (1986-1996), Don investigated new telecom and networking markets, finding and evaluating new investment opportunities. He authored a monthly column in Communications Week, was co-chair of the annual Accel/Stanford Center for Telecommunications Symposium, and was the first webmaster in the venture capital industry. He worked closely with companies such as UUNET, Teleos, Clear Communications and PictureTel.

Don founded the first acappella music catalog in his spare bedroom in 1992. Eventually it grew to three divisions: A-Cappella.com, the largest source of a cappella music in the world; Varsity Vocals, which ran the college singing competition at the center of the hit movie Pitch Perfect; and a sheet music publishing company. Those businesses were sold in 2007, but he occasionally closes his talks with a tune from his growing Sinatra repertoire. Don received his B.A. from Yale University cum laude with distinction in Economics in 1981, concentrating on the economics of data transmission.

**SUZANNE HAMLIN,**  
 Director of Business Venture Group, Maine Technology Institute

As Director of MTI's Business Ventures Group, Suzanne Hamlin oversees the funding and support programs for R&D projects leading to commercialization. Suzanne has worked with MTI since 2004 as a member of the SBIR/STTR Technical Assistance Program team that has helped Maine businesses secure over \$85 million in SBIR/STTR funding from the Small Business Administration.



Suzanne has extensive experience in business planning and analysis in a wide variety of industries. Her direct industry experience includes retail, direct marketing, medical products, manufacturing, banking, and insurance, as well as a broad range of non-profits, and she has consulted heavily in all seven of Maine's target technology sectors. She holds a BSE in Computer Science from Princeton University, with honors, and an MBA from the Harvard Business School.

**RENEE KELLY,**  
 Director of Economic Development Initiatives, University of Maine

Renee Kelly serves as the University of Maine's liaison to the state's economic development community and works directly with innovation-driven businesses to help them reach their potential in the state of Maine. She leads the University's entrepreneurship and innovation support activities including the Foster Center for Student Innovation, which helps students become innovators and entrepreneurs. Renee also leads UMaine's efforts in the Innovation Engineering Institute, a collaboration to commercialize its Innovation Engineering curriculum with education institutions worldwide. Prior to joining the university, she developed new training products for Manpower of Connecticut, did marketing for a start-up in San Diego, CA and served as an aide to then U.S. Representative Olympia J. Snowe. She received her A.B. from Smith College, M.A. from the University of Maine, and researches how to make innovation successful in rural areas.



**JESS KNOX,**

Statewide Innovation Hub Coordinator, Blackstone Accelerates Growth

Jess Knox has served as Blackstone Accelerates Growth statewide hub coordinator since 2012. He is also the founder of Maine Startup and Create Week and the website Startup Portland, and was a member of the inaugural StartUp Weekend in Portland.



From 1996 to 2009, Jess ran a consulting firm that built grassroots organizations across the country, with a focus on rural areas. In 2009, he was appointed as an executive to the U.S. Small Business Administration where he focused on building and executing systems and programs to support the success of small businesses and entrepreneurs across the country. Today, Jess employs his diverse background for both individual private business clients, as well as organizations. Jess is committed to supporting the growth and success of innovators, startups, and creative entrepreneurs, whatever size.

Previously, Jess served as the Vice President and Partner in the Washington D.C. consulting firm Growth Squared in July 2011. He served as the firm’s Vice-President, servicing client companies and providing insight on growth, workforce relationships and other business strategies. In 2008, he served as the Deputy National Political Director for the John Edwards for President Campaign. Prior to that, Jess worked as a consultant for various campaigns and organizations with a focus on rural public policy issues and grassroots advocacy. In 2004 Jess received a Juris Doctorate from the University Maine School of Law. Prior to law school, Jess pursued a Master’s Degree in Public Policy and Public Organization Management from the Edmund S. Muskie School of Public Service, and received a Bachelor’s Degree in Politics and Government from Ohio Wesleyan University.

**JOSEPH MIGLIACCIO**

Director of Business Development, Maine Technology Institute

Joe Migliaccio is MTI's Director of Business Development, and leads MTI's targeted effort to expand MTI's funding opportunities for technology development with early and late-stage ventures. Joe has been with MTI since 2000 and previously served as the Director of the Business Ventures Group.

Joe has been involved with small business throughout his life, including ownership in specialty foods and retail service. He has formal and practical training in immunology, bioassays, product development and business leadership. During 10 years at IDEXX Laboratories in Westbrook, Maine, he worked as an assay development project leader in R&D, a supervisor of global technical support and managed a multi-million dollar line of tests and equipment. He has had primary responsibility for product-line strategy, product launch, customer satisfaction and achievement of revenue goals.

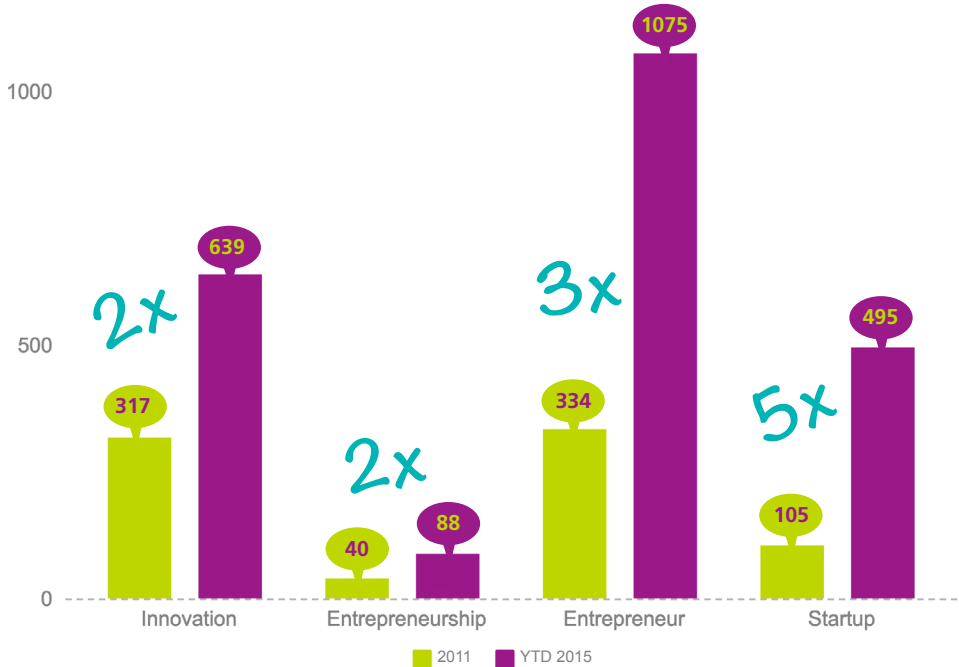


Joe initially studied engineering at the University of Maine and graduated with an undergraduate degree in Biology from the University of Southern Maine. He holds an MBA from Southern New Hampshire University in Manchester, NH and serves on various business boards and committees.



# BY THE GROWTH

## GROWTH IN AWARENESS



From 2011 to June 2015, the number of mentions of terms “innovation,” “entrepreneurship,” “entrepreneur” and “startup” in Maine news publications at least doubled. In the case of the word “startup” the growth was almost five times.

## BXG PARTNER AND COMMUNITY AWARDS

Maine Development Foundation’s Champion of Attraction, Retention, and Engagement 2013 – *The BxG Innovate for Maine Fellows Program*

Maine Biz Nexter – *MCED Executive Director Don Gooding*

Greater Portland Regional Chamber of Commerce’s Robert R. Masterton Award for support of the regional entrepreneurial environment 2015 – *MCED Executive Director Don Gooding and BxG statewide hub coordinator Jess Knox*

SBA Accelerator Challenge 2015 – *Top Gun*

Maine Development Foundation’s Champion of Innovation 2012 – *MTI*

Elected Chair, Bangor Area Chamber of Commerce – *Renee Kelly, University of Maine*

Bangor Region Chamber of Commerce Non-Profit of the Year – *Foster Center for Student Innovation at UMaine, home of the BxG Innovate for Maine Fellows*

New England Board of Higher Education State Merit Award  
*Target Technology Incubator hub partner at UMaine*

## JUST A FEW BXG ENTREPRENEUR AND COMPANY AWARDS:

Mass High Tech's "Top 5 Start-ups to Watch in 2012"  
 Juvenile Product Manufacturer's Association Innovation Award finalist 2015  
 Maine Biz Nexter 2014 • Good Food Award Winner  
 Paul and Yvette Mitchell Pioneer Scholar in Business and Entrepreneurship Fair Food Fund Business  
 Boot Camp Participant • Digital Innovator of the Year  
 SCORE successful young entrepreneur under 30 • Outstanding Small Green Business  
 Maine Biz Nexter 2013  
 One of Maine's Hottest Showcasing Startups at the Tech Cocktail Showcase 2014 Pet Age Magazine  
 Retailer of the Year with Revenues under \$5 Million  
 2014 Pet Product News International Retailer of the Year for Outstanding Community Outreach  
 2014 Best Maine Pet Product • 2014 Best of the Best for Knox & Waldo Counties  
 2014 SBA Woman Owned Business Nominee  
 2014 Small Business of the Year • Maine Biz Women to Watch 2014  
 San Francisco World Spirits Competition: Bronze medal SIP awards: Gold medal  
 Semi-finalist in "The Big C" Competition by LiveStrong  
 Craft and Hobby Top 20 New Products for 2014  
 Cleantech Open Northeast's 2012 Regional Semi-Finalists  
 Bangor Region Chamber of Commerce Business of the Year  
 Google X Prize finalist • MaineBiz Nexter 2015  
 SBA Businessperson of the Year 2015 • SBA Young Entrepreneur of the Year  
 College of Natural Sciences & Forestry Ph.D. Student of the Year  
 UMaine Business Challenge winner

## AND A FEW SAMPLE ACCOLADES FOR MAINE AND THE BXG HUBS:

**"13 of the fastest growing tech hubs in U.S."** (Portland)

<http://uncubed.com/2015/02/11/13-fastest-growing-tech-hubs-us/>

**"A Beer Powered Startup scene grows in Portland, Maine"**

<http://www.popularmechanics.com/technology/startups/a28/portland-maine-startup-city-reinvents-itself-17603379/>

**"Portland-South Portland named #5 city to start a small business in the U.S. in 2015"**

<http://www.forbes.com/pictures/fjle45liem/no-5-portland-south-port/>

**"Cumberland County (maine) listed as the #1 area in the country for growth in 2015"**

<http://sethkoenig.bangordailynews.com/2015/03/25/city/cumberland-county-ranked-one-of-10-in-the-country-most-poised-for-growth/>

**"We are Bangor"** on NBC nightly news

<http://www.nbcnews.com/nightly-news/video/-we-are-bangor---residents-explain-city-s-proper-pronunciation-396488259779>



# The Companies

*A Sampling*

## BXG COMPANIES ARE:

100% of Gorham Savings Bank LaunchPad finalists

86% of Maine's reported equity investment deals in 2015

69% of GreenLight Maine finalists

## MULTIPLE BXG TOUCHES

### ABIERTO NETWORKS

Abierto Networks is a leading provider of Digital Marketing Solutions for the convenience store and retail petroleum industry. Abierto's Digital Marketing Platform (DMP) allows you to target consumers with Electronic Mobile Coupons redeemable in your POS. DMP's Intelligent Signage automatically changes in-store messaging by time of day or day of week. Abierto Gateway IP Converters are PA-DSS certified. Founded in 2005 and now located in Eliot, ME.



*BxG touches: Innovation for Maine Fellow host company;  
MTI Portfolio company*

### AMERICAN UNAGI LLC

American Unagi LLC is a pre-revenue startup aquaculture business focused on growing Maine harvested glass eels to market size for sale in both domestic and international markets. The glass eel fishery is a valuable resource and Maine is one of only two states with access to this fishery. These glass eels are currently shipped to an eel aquaculture industry in Asia. American Unagi LLC plans to develop the recirculating aquaculture technology for growing American eels.



*BxG touches: Top Gun alumni and midcoast Top Gun showcase winner 2015;  
Innovate for Maine fellow host company;  
MTI portfolio company*

### ATAYNE

Atayne makes high performing outdoor and athletic apparel for activities such as running, cycling, and cross-country skiing. However, they do things much differently than others in the industry. Not only does Atayne make products with exceptional performance, they make them in a way that is safe for people and the planet. They call it Performance with a Point of View. From a performance standpoint, their products are second to none. Atayne have been selected as the performance apparel provider by some great events and organizations such as: The Dempsey Challenge, Freedom's Run, the Vermont 100, and the Army National Guard Running Team.



*BxG touches: Innovate for Maine fellow host company;  
MTI portfolio company*

### AUBURN MANUFACTURING

Auburn Manufacturing, Inc. is the industry's leading expert in the manufacture of high performance textiles for extreme temperature protection. For decades, AMI textile solutions have been applied around the world in the manufacture of metals, petroleum, chemicals, glass, paper and wherever flames and extreme heat can be a danger.



*BxG touches: Innovate for Maine fellow host company,  
MTI portfolio company*

## **BELTANE**

Beltane is commercializing technology that will concentrate the sun's energy to create electricity, hot water and drinking water. Their patent-pending solar module has a total efficiency of >60% yet is simple, scalable, reliable and low cost. They are currently completing development using grant funding and have received strong interest from partners in the Middle East and Northern Africa. Beltane was formed in 2011 by experienced technology business leaders to "get more from the sun."™



*BxG touches: Innovate for Maine fellow host company;  
MTI portfolio company*

## **BEVY**

A B2B mobile platform for the alcoholic beverage industry, connecting bars/restaurants with distributors - enabling increased profitability through automation and analytics. Bevy streamlines the communication between bars/restaurants and distributors, allowing users to search products across all distributors, place orders directly, manage invoices, billing, and inventory all in one place. Bevy provides analytics to help reduce bar and restaurant beverage costs, improve purchasing efficiency, and generate greater profits.



*BxG touches: Top Gun alumni 2015;  
Innovate for Maine fellow host;  
MTI portfolio company*

## **BITZY BABY**

Bitzy Baby® is a juvenile safety product company with a mission to instill confidence in parents that when their baby is put to bed they'll sleep safely. Our goal is to revolutionize and shift the paradigm of the infant's sleeping environment, with the patented Bitzy Bumper® breathable infant bedding technology.



*BxG touches:  
Innovate for Maine fellow host;  
MTI portfolio company*

## **BIXBY & CO.**

Bixby Bars = chocolate + fruit + nut + spice = REAL FOOD

Bixby & Co. is an innovative chocolate bar manufacturer based in Rockland Maine. Bixby Bars are produced in six unique flavors that combine organic, sustainably sourced chocolate with nuts, dried fruits and spices, Bixby & Co. creates healthy and nutritious chocolate options that are all Certified Gluten Free, Kosher, Verified Vegan options, and are Non-GMO Project verified. A 100% certified Woman's Owned and YouthTrade Certified business, Bixby & Co. is pioneering a new age in innovative entrepreneurship in the food sector.



*BxG touches: BxG Accelerated Venture;  
Top Gun Prep alumni;  
Innovate for Maine fellow host company*

## BIZZIEME

bizzieMe™ is an interactive, multi-media, retention marketing tool. They build games around your brand to offer one more way for you to deliver a positive experience to your customers. While their patent-pending digital platform gives them the flexibility to address any audience, they're focusing on kids who often drive family hospitality choices, such as restaurant selection. By providing a great interactive experience, bizzieMe™ increases customer loyalty and repeat business with branded games and activities for your customers' personal mobile devices.



*BxG touches: Top Gun Prep alumni;  
Top Gun alumni 2014;  
Innovate for Maine fellow host company;  
MTI portfolio company*

## BLUE OX MALT HOUSE

Blue Ox Malthouse produces high quality, locally sourced malts for Maine and New England Craft Brewers. For the first time, Maine grown grains can stay in state and make their way into Maine's craft beers. They are dedicated to working tirelessly to build up Maine's malting capacity and deliver the high quality local ingredients to their clients.



*BxG touches: Top Gun Prep alumni;  
Top Gun alumni 2014;  
Innovate for Maine fellow host company;  
MTI portfolio company*

## BOURGEOIS GUITARS

Bourgeois Guitars are hand crafted in Lewiston Maine. Played by professionals worldwide from Ricky Skaggs to Monte Pittman (Madonna guitarist), Ray Lamontagne, Bryan Sutton and many others, their guitars are sold from Boston to China to South Africa. Their guitars combine vintage tone and features with modern playability at quality levels to rival any makers in the world.



*BxG touches: Innovate for Maine fellow host company;  
MTI portfolio company*

## CASHSTAR

CashStar developed the first digital gifting and incentives platform that enables your customers to email personalized gift cards. Drawing on years of experience in the payments industry, they passionately believe that the eGifting experience should be more personal, compelling and convenient for your customers.



*BxG touches: Innovate for Maine fellow host company;  
MTI portfolio company*

## CERAHELIX

Cerahelix, Inc. is developing a patented ceramic nanofiltration membrane that provides high purity separations under harsh operating conditions. Their product, the helix-NFM™, is able to remove dissolved contaminants from water with less fouling and compatibility issues compared to organic polymer filters, and at lower energy requirements compared to traditional separation technologies. Cerahelix is conducting initial pilot studies in the Oil and Gas industry to purify produced water from fracking.



*BxG touches: BxG Accelerated Venture;  
Innovate for Maine fellow host company;  
MTI portfolio company*

## COMPOTECH

Compotech is a technology company that was spun-off from the University of Maine's Advanced Structures and Composites Center in 2011. The team specializes in the development, design, and commercialization of composite materials and structures with a focus on defense technologies. Compotech's services include: engineering consulting, advanced finite element modeling, design and manufacturing of composites structures, and development and production of blast and ballistic protection systems.



*BxG touches: Innovate for Maine fellow host company;  
MTI portfolio company*

## COURSESTORM

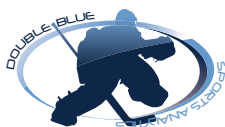
CourseStorm connects students to local education through online registration software. Simple tools get the job done quickly, saving time and money. They know you're busy, so they've spent countless hours building simple, but powerful, tools to help programs like yours to connect with their students.



*BxG touches: Top Gun alumni 2015;  
MTI portfolio company*

## DOUBLE BLUE SPORTS ANALYTICS

Double Blue Sports Analytics develops next generation analytical and sharing applications to craft meaningful stories in sports. They transform athletic analysis by pushing the boundaries of what's technologically possible and deliver data, context and graphic visualization to provide new perspectives on performance for athletes, teams, coaches and the media.



*BxG touches: BxG Accelerated Venture;  
Top Gun Prep alumni;  
Top Gun alumni 2013;  
Innovate for Maine fellow host company;*

*MTI portfolio company*

## DREAM LOCAL DIGITAL

Dream Local Digital, a full-service national marketing agency, helps media publishers and businesses build their brands online, connect with their communities on social media, and develop campaigns that resonate with an online audience, with a custom suite of small business marketing agency products.



*BxG touches: BxG Accelerated Venture;  
Innovate for Maine fellow host company*

## ENVIRONETIX

Environetix provides high-quality custom wireless sensor solutions to meet the challenges of measuring high temperature, pressure, vibration, and strain in extreme and harsh environments. With patented, battery-free and wireless surface acoustic wave technologies, Environetix helps customers in power generation, gas & oil, aerospace and other industries eliminate costly, unnecessary maintenance, reduce lifetime maintenance costs, simplify and ruggedize instrument installation and extend the lifetime of engines, turbines, power plant boiler systems, testing rigs, and more.



*BxG touches: Top Gun alumni 2012;  
Innovate for Maine fellow host company;  
Innovation Engineering scholarship;  
MTI portfolio company*

## FLUID IMAGING TECHNOLOGIES

Fluid Imaging Technologies, Inc. is a spinoff from Bigelow Laboratory for Ocean Sciences in East Boothbay Harbor, ME. The original FlowCam® was developed at Bigelow for studying plankton in ocean water. FlowCam's automated imaging technology enables you to analyze particles accurately, reliably, and quickly in order to advance research, increase productivity, and ensure quality, with applications in aquatic research, oil and gas, water management, biopharmaceutical and other markets.



*BxG touches: BxG Accelerated Venture;  
Innovate for Maine fellow host company;  
MTI portfolio company*

## HISTORYIT

HistoryIT is a technology and services company that provides clients with a brand new approach for making historical collections more useful, meaningful, and findable. Led by teams of expert historians, archivists, and technologists, HistoryIT works with cultural institutions, universities, community organizations, professional associations and others to unlock new value from existing assets. The company's innovative approach to digital archive software and services places them at the vanguard of how history is catalogued, stored and accessed.



*BxG touches: BxG Accelerated Venture;  
MTI portfolio company*



## INTROSPECTIVE SYSTEMS

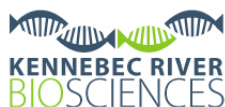
As a software company - either assembling thousands of sensor reads or organizing unstructured data for architects - Introspective brings simplicity to complex information management. Introspective Systems' core software technology platform, NexusX™, addresses the inundation of information as we enter the age of the Internet of Things (IoT). Their first product, SIMplexity™ aggregates, analyses, and visualizes information for architects, developers and engineers – a single software tool that traces and tracks information interdependencies in real-time.



*BxG touches: Top Gun alumni 2012;  
Innovate for Maine fellow host company;  
Innovation Engineering scholarship;  
MTI portfolio company*

## KENNEBEC RIVER BIOSCIENCES

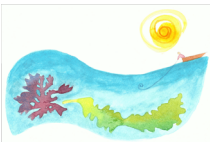
Based in Richmond, Maine, Kennebec River Biosciences (KRB) uses blue biotech to ensure healthy fish and shellfish, healthy aquatic animal farms, and healthy fisheries. KRB provides comprehensive diagnostic and certification services to a global clientele of over 500 farmers, government resource agencies, and research institutions, as well as an expanding line of veterinary biologics designed to strengthen fish and shellfish health, productivity and sustainability.



*BxG touches: BxG Accelerated Venture;  
Top Gun alumni;  
Innovate for Maine fellow host company;  
MTI portfolio company*

## MAINE FRESH SEA FARMS, LLC

Maine Fresh Sea Farms researches and develops marine aquaculture protocols for multiple species of sea vegetables in Maine to produce and market products made from the sea farmed produce. Although sea farming promises to meet customer demands for a variety of sustainable grown sea vegetables with year-round availability, no such farms currently exist. We propose to prove the feasibility of and then build such a sea farm.



*BxG touches: Top Gun alumni 2015;  
MTI portfolio company*

## MAINE MEAD WORKS

Maine Mead Works was founded in 2008, initially as a technology development partnership with Makana Meadery in Grahamstown, South Africa. The company is now commercializing a patent-pending continuous fermentation process that is able to produce high quality mead or "honey wine." Maine Mead Works is currently a leader in this emerging alcoholic beverage category selling more than 15 products in 11 States across the US.



HONEYMAKER.  
MAINE MEAD WORKS | PORTLAND, ME

*BxG touches: Top Gun Prep;  
Top Gun alumni 2013;  
MTI portfolio company*

## MINGLE ANALYTICS

Mingle Analytics provides products and services that help doctors and health systems use healthcare informatics to improve quality and cost of care and practice profitability. They help doctors to access and use their data to meet new regulatory and healthcare reform requirements.



*BxG touches: BxG Accelerated Venture;  
Top Gun alumni 2014;  
MTI portfolio company*

## OCEAN RENEWABLE POWER COMPANY

Since its founding ten years ago in 2004, Ocean Renewable Power Company has become a global leader in the marine hydrokinetic power industry by successfully developing new technology and projects. Named one of the “World’s Top Ten Most Innovative Companies in Energy” by Fast Company in 2012, ORPC designed and operated the first federally licensed, grid-connected tidal energy project in the U.S. in Cobscook Bay, Maine. The company also secured the first long-term power purchase agreement for tidal energy in the U.S. and has demonstration projects in Alaska, Nova Scotia and Ireland.



*BxG touches: BxG Accelerated Venture;  
MTI portfolio company*

## PARENT TECHNOLOGY GROUP

Parent Technology Group, LLC has developed solar textiles that transform solar energy into electricity. Their textiles are poised to provide a power generation solution that is light and reliable, with no adverse environmental impact. PTG’s finished textile itself, without any add-on solar devices, is capable of generating electrical power.

### **Parent Technology Group, LLC**

Windham, Maine 04062 USA ♦ 1 207 831 9068 ♦ don@puresolarfabric.com

*BxG touches: Top Gun alumni 2015;  
Innovate for Maine fellow host company;  
MTI portfolio company*

## PIKA ENERGY

Pika Energy builds the world’s most advanced and cost effective small wind turbines providing electrical power in remote places, helping families cut their electric bills, and reducing environmental impact. Designed, built and tested in Maine, Pika’s technology makes it easy to combine wind and solar power for a more autonomous system, and the built in Wi-Fi connection lets customers track system performance from anywhere in the world.



*BxG touches: BxG Accelerated Venture;  
Top Gun alumni 2012;  
Innovate for Maine fellow host company;  
MTI portfolio company*

## RAPPORT IO

Rapport is designed to help small and mid-sized businesses realize the benefits of sustainability: Save Money, Comply with Customer Data Requests, Win New Contracts and Bolster your Brand. They built a tool that makes it easy for you to capture data, make business decisions that will save you money, and safely share data with customers and other stakeholders.



*BxG touches: Top Gun alumni 2015;  
Top Gun showcase winner 2015;  
Innovate for Maine fellow host company*

## ROCKSTEP SOLUTIONS

“RockStep Powers Research” Built by a team of former Jackson Laboratory colleagues, RockStep Solutions is a high tech company with a focus on research laboratory information. RockStep systems are designed in collaboration with technology experts and researchers. RockStep’s flagship product is called CLIMB, a cloud hosted information management system that leverages advanced mobile technologies and cloud computing systems. The software is designed to fundamentally change the way research data are managed and analyzed.



*BxG touches: Top Gun alumni 2015;  
Top Gun regional showcase winner 2015;  
Innovate for Maine fellow host company;  
MTI portfolio company*

## MAINE TEXTILES, D/B/A SACO RIVER DYEHOUSE

Since beginning operations in December of 2012, the Dyehouse has been offering contract dyeing services for a range of yarn and textile customers, handling approximately 1500 pounds of raw materials a week and growing steadily. The team has more than twenty years experience in textile dyeing and production. They have a GOT (Global organic textile) certified dyeing unit in Maine, where they dye all natural fiber that is wool/cotton/Silk in fiber/Tops, Yarn and Piece with all synthetic dyes, organic dyes and botanical dyes.



*BxG touches: Innovate for Maine fellow host company;  
MTI portfolio company*

## TETHYS RESEARCH

Tethys Research LLC specializes in enzyme and metabolite discovery, currently focusing on the pulp, paper, and bioenergy markets. Enzymes that can separate plant biomatter into fermentable vs. non-fermentable materials are badly needed to replace dangerous, polluting chemicals. Tethys’s enzymes don’t damage or depolymerize plant polymers and readily biodegrade.



*BxG touches: Top Gun alumni 2012;  
Innovate for Maine fellow host company;  
MTI portfolio company*

## TIDE CREATIVE/LULAWED

LulaWed is an image-driven marketing platform that helps wedding professionals connect and share images. They are working to connect the wedding industry and make marketing more approachable for 370,000 wedding related businesses.



*BxG touches: Top Gun Prep;  
Top Gun alumni 2013;  
Innovate for Maine fellow host company;  
MTI portfolio company*

## WIRELESS SENSORS

Wireless Sensors manufactures advanced sensor networks leveraging Internet of Things technology for energy optimization and regulatory compliance in commercial and life science applications.



*BxG touches: Innovate for Maine fellow host company;  
MTI portfolio company*

## COMPANIES SERVED NOVEMBER 2011-JUNE 2015

3 Potato 4  
5Squared Consulting  
A Barnes LLC  
Abierto  
Abundance Trade Group  
Academic Merit  
Activas Diagnostics  
Adventure Play  
Adventurous Joe Coffee  
Alga Foods  
All Nations Consulting  
Allagash Brewing Company  
Advanced Manufacturing Center,  
University of Maine  
American Unagi  
Apiara  
Applied Ponc Technologies  
ArchSolar  
Armaid  
Ass over Teakettle  
Atayne  
Auburn Manufacturing  
Aware Technology  
Axiom Technologies  
Azarias  
Bangor Daily News  
Barn Again  
Beach Glass Transitions  
Begin the Dance  
Beltane Solar  
Bevy  
Big Room Studios  
Biovation  
Bitzy Baby  
Bixby & Co.  
Bizzieme  
Black Bear Coop  
Black Dinah Chocolatiers  
Black Lobster Academy  
Blue Ox Malt House  
Bourgeois Guitars  
Buoy Local  
Burger Boy  
Burnt Metal Designs Jewelry  
Butterfield Technologies  
BxG  
Canterbury Royale  
Caroline Childress  
Casco Carts  
CashStar  
Catalysis Adaptation  
Cathance Lake Consulting  
Cerahelix  
Charette Primary Health Care  
Chimani  
Chris's Custom Crafts  
ClaimVantage  
Cloud 9  
Coffee by Design  
Competitive Energy Services  
Compotech  
Connie Ullman Dowie Enterprises  
CourseStorm  
Da Vinci Experience  
Dahl Chase Diagnostics  
DarkFire Graphics  
Darn Good Yarn Inc  
Double Blue Sports Analytics  
Dream Local Digital  
Dukkha's Nemesis  
Eagre Interactive  
EepyBird, LLC  
Ekclipse  
Eastern Maine Healthcare Systems  
Emma's Maine  
Environetix  
Essential Wellness Center  
Expression Computing  
Farmer's Helper  
Fiber Processing  
Flagsuit, LLC  
Flowfold  
FLR Publishing  
Fluid Imaging  
Fluorometrics  
For Cod and Country  
Forager1  
Fortune Smiles Farmstead  
Four Bridges Project  
Freeport Sewer District  
FVG  
Garbage to Garden  
Gemini Marine Products  
Genotyping Center of America  
Geotechnical Engineering  
Services  
Goals With Friends  
GoFigure!  
Gold Star Honeybees  
Green Pod LLC  
GWI  
Harbor Technologies  
High Touch Group  
History IT  
Howard Tool Co.  
Howell Laboratories  
Hyperlite Mountain Gear  
IDEXX  
InfoSecurus  
Innovation Policyworks LLC  
Insect Lab  
Insightful Products  
International Lobster and Sea-  
food Festival  
Interpersonal Communication  
Consulting  
Interphase Energy  
Introspective Systems  
IRC Solar Roof  
J Ray Corp.  
Jackson Laboratory  
James Cheviot  
Jazzy Johnnys  
Jim's Autoglass Repair  
KahBang  
KAPPA Mapping  
Kennebec River Biosciences  
Kevin Ashburn Designs  
KitchenSync  
L&K Manufacturing  
LifeKite  
Lisa's Legit Burritos  
Local Muscle  
Loo-Hoo  
Love Rocks Me  
Love Your Artist  
Loyal Biscuit  
Lucy Green  
Lucy's Granola  
Mackworth-Enviro  
Magic Number Labs

MAIC	Orono Economic Development Corporation	Strips & Pieces
Maine Dayboat Scallops	OwnerAide	Sullivan Plastic Products
Maine Development Foundation	Parent Technology Group, LLC	Summer Feet Cycling
Maine Fresh Sea Farms LLC	Pathmatica	Sunnyside Family Farm
Maine Healthy Snacks	Pelaton Labs	Sunrise Guide
Maine Made Baby Food	Pelletco	Swans Island Company
Maine Mead Works	PIKA Energy	Talus
Maine Medicinals	PJ Coeur	Tethys Research
Maine Original Tea	Pleurablade	The Juice Cellar
Maine Shellware	Porter Farms	The Maine Shoe Project
Maine Wedding Guide	Portland Pudgy	The Rugby Net
Mainely SEO	Promise Pretzels of Maine	Theralast
Mapleroc Industries	Putney	Tide Creative
Market Street Coop	Puzzle Apparel	Tip Whip
MCED	Q5 Labs	Traps Eyewear
Meadowfly Farm	Quince	Udesign Laser Tech
MiFILTER.com	Rainstorm	Uplift Wellness Media
Mind Frame 4	RainWise	Urban Farm Fermentory
Mingle Analytics	Rapport IO	Vacationland Berries
MITC	Redd Energy	Vinland
Mitokine Bioscience	Revision Heat	Virtual Management Solutions
Mobile Health Group	RH Foster	Voice Into Learning
Mobile Magic	Richard Scudder Productions	WE ARE Fragrances
Mobile Movies	Rising Tide Consulting	Wealth Gathering
MTI	Road Collect	Whoopie Pie Cafe
MusiKata	Rockport Imaging LLC	Wireless Sensors
Must Try It Media, Inc.	RockStep Solutions	Wizbe Innovations
Mutt Nose Best	Rohrer Technologies	World Engineering
Myfreighthub.com	Roux Camp	Zeomatrix
MyMedicalBestFriend	Saco River Dyehouse	
Nanocran	Sappi	
NBT Solutions	SBK Mediation	
Need Shelter	Science Source	
New Concepts Engineering	Sea & Reef Aquaculture	
Newfield Design	Sea Bags	
NexGen Agriponics	SeaChange Group	
Nonesuch Oysters	Shaw & Tenney	
North Country Comforters	Shaw & Tenney	
Northern Girl	Shift Energy	
Northern Maine Distilling Company	Simply Good Medical Software	
Northern New England Community Resources	Solar Roof Systems	
Nyle Systems	Solstice Corp.	
O'Brien Medical	Specialty Sweets	
Oats Any Time	Sterling Rope	
Ocean Renewable Power Company	Stewardship GEM	
Open Bench Project	Stone Fox Farm Creamery	



## Press Coverage

### **Blackstone Accelerates Growth and our companies have made a buzz in Maine traditional and social media. Here are just a few of our recent stories...**

"Ain't She Sweet": Profile of Kate McAleer of Bixby & Co.

- <http://www.downeast.com/aint-she-sweet/>

"Portland Gift Card Startup Partners with Bangor Savings to Pursue Statewide Expansion": News on Buoy Local

- <http://www.mainebiz.biz/article/20150828/NEWS0101/150829957/portland-gift-card-startup-partners-with-bangor-savings-to-pursue-statewide-expansion>

"SBA gives three Maine organizations \$50,000"

- <http://www.pressherald.com/2015/08/04/sba-gives-50k-to-2-maine-nonprofits/>

"AOL Co-founder will give \$100,000 to local startup during visit"

- <http://www.pressherald.com/2015/08/04/aol-co-founder-schedules-october-visit-to-portland/>

"Steve Case to invest \$100,000 in Maine startup as part of bus tour"

- [http://www.mainebiz.biz/article/20150804/NEWS0101/150809989/aol-s-steve-case-to-invest-\\$100k-in-portland-startup-as-part-of-bus-tour](http://www.mainebiz.biz/article/20150804/NEWS0101/150809989/aol-s-steve-case-to-invest-$100k-in-portland-startup-as-part-of-bus-tour)

"Fieldstack tapped for Blackstone 'accelerated ventures' program"

- <http://www.mainebiz.biz/article/20150309/NEWS0101/150309958/fieldstack-tapped-for-blackstone-'accelerated-ventures'-program>

"Maine entrepreneurs ready pitches for 'Green Light Maine' competition"

- <http://www.pressherald.com/2015/06/29/maine-entrepreneurs-ready-pitches-for-televised-competition/>

"Green Light Maine show dangles \$100,000 prize for entrepreneurs"

- [http://www.mainebiz.biz/article/20150605/NEWS0101/150609969/'greenlight-maine'-pitch-show-dangles-\\$100000-prize-for-entrepreneurs](http://www.mainebiz.biz/article/20150605/NEWS0101/150609969/'greenlight-maine'-pitch-show-dangles-$100000-prize-for-entrepreneurs)

"GreenLight Maine names 44 quarterfinalists"

- [http://www.mainebiz.biz/article/20150622/NEWS0101/150629994/greenlight-maine-names-44-quarterfinalists-to-vie-for-\\$100000-prize-in-entrepreneur-contest](http://www.mainebiz.biz/article/20150622/NEWS0101/150629994/greenlight-maine-names-44-quarterfinalists-to-vie-for-$100000-prize-in-entrepreneur-contest)

"Green Light Maine picks it's 44 quarterfinalists"

- <http://www.pressherald.com/2015/06/23/44-startups-shine-for-greenlight/>

"Maine Startup and Create Week Kicks Off Monday in Portland"

- <http://www.betaboston.com/news/2015/06/22/maine-startup-and-create-week-kicks-off-on-monday-in-portland/>

"Looking to grow your business? Maine Startup & Create Week is for you, organizer says"

- <http://www.mainebiz.biz/article/20150619/NEWS0101/150619935/looking-to-grow-your-business?-maine-startup-&-create-week-is-for-you-organizer-says>

“A Word With the Boss: Agitator for entrepreneurship nurtures Maine’s startup community”

- <http://www.pressherald.com/2015/05/28/a-word-with-the-boss-agitator-for-entrepreneurship-nurtures-maines-startup-community/>

“Celebration of entrepreneurship takes off tastefully”

- <http://www.pressherald.com/2015/06/22/maine-startup-create-week-takes-off-tastefully/>

“TopGun Finalists shoot for \$10k tonight”

- [http://www.mainebiz.biz/article/20150603/NEWS0101/150609980/top-gun-finalists-shoot-for-\\$10k-prize-tonight](http://www.mainebiz.biz/article/20150603/NEWS0101/150609980/top-gun-finalists-shoot-for-$10k-prize-tonight)

“Success for the Innovate for Maine Fellows Program”

- <http://disruptivegrowth.bangordailynews.com/2015/04/08/success-from-the-innovate-for-maine-fellows-program/>

“Innovation Maine-Style: A Creativity Hub Hopes to Keep Good Ideas In-State”

- <http://www.mainebiz.biz/article/20140825/CURRENTEDITION/308209994/innovation-maine-style:-a-creativity-hub-hopes-to-keep-good-ideas-in-state>

“Top Gun finalists to compete for \$10k prize tonight”

- <http://www.pressherald.com/2015/06/01/top-gun-finalists-to-compete-for-10000-prize/>

“Portland, Maine’s startup scene surges”

- <http://www.nerdwallet.com/blog/small-business/portland-maine-startup-tech-scene/>

“UMaine to hold small business conference”

- <http://www.mainebiz.biz/article/20150406/NEWS0101/150409975/umaine-to-hold-small-business-conference>

“ICYMI: All the coverage of Maine Startup & Create Week”

- <http://www.pressherald.com/2015/06/29/icymi-coverage-maine-startup-create-week/>

“UMaine graduate student selected as BigGig Winner”

- <http://mainecampus.com/2015/04/19/umaine-graduate-selected-as-winning-2015-big-gig-business-pitch/>

“TopGun Program Accelerates Maine Entrepreneurs”

- <http://backtobusiness.bangordailynews.com/2015/02/19/home/top-gun-program-accelerates-maine-entrepreneurs/>

“A Beer Powered Startup-Scene Grows in Portland, Maine”

- <http://www.popularmechanics.com/technology/startups/a28/portland-maine-startup-city-reinvents-itself-17603379/>

“Franklin company’s seafood to be featured at D.C. dinner event”

- <http://www.ellsworthamerican.com/maine-news/waterfront/franklin-companys-seafood-to-be-featured-at-d-c-dinner-event>

“How to Pitch Steve Case”

- <http://contributors.pressherald.com/business/the-startupline/get-business-idea-front-steve-case/>