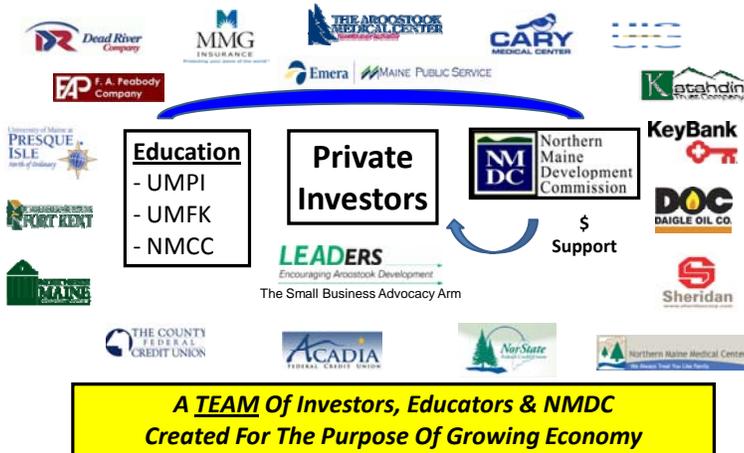


# NEWS RELEASE



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For more information contact:  
at: 498-8736

The Aroostook Partnership for Progress (APP) is initiating a new project entitled “Aroostook County Jobs Projection”. The purpose of this effort is to help stem student outmigration (a 5 decade-old problem), to inform Junior High and High School students of upcoming job opportunities in Aroostook County, and to aid Aroostook businesses with aging workforces by providing them with potential prospects to help them maintain or grow their businesses.

This project will be kicking off in the near future with the APP President Bob Dorsey contacting a number of the 50 largest businesses/employers to ask them for their projected workforce needs & skills over the next 5 years. The initial information Bob is seeking will include a) the total # of current employees, b) the anticipated number of needed positions over the next five years, c) the desired skill sets needed to fulfill these positions successfully, d) the projected income and/or salary range and e) whether the company provides benefits. That information, once collected, will be input into a database that will then be provided to all Aroostook County High Schools and Junior High Schools, posted on the APP web site, and also given to our local colleges for their use to evaluate and refine their curriculum.

After the initial effort is started, it is APP’s intent to engage college business students to continue calling the remainder of the Top 50 largest companies to get their anticipated needs and then revise and keep the County Jobs Projection database current on an annual basis. Once the largest 50 companies’ data have been collected, APP with the help of these business students, will continue to contact smaller businesses as well as municipalities to collect their anticipated employment needs in order to get a more complete picture of the total upcoming Aroostook County job opportunities.

As a secondary measure, we will ask the Aroostook County High Schools how many students are projected to graduate, how many Seniors intend to further their education and the direction they intend to focus their studies (if known) to provide local companies with information on upcoming graduate potential. This data will also be posted on the APP web site for reference.

This project will be beneficial from several aspects:

- First and foremost, it can be used by Aroostook County schools’ Guidance departments to inform our students of the job potential here in Aroostook County. While it is inevitable that some students will leave the County to pursue certain careers, APP would like to tackle, head on, the impression that “you have to leave the County or the State to get a good job”.

- Second, with the aging workforce situation, it is APP's hope that this effort will get County businesses thinking more about their future anticipated needs so that those positions can be hopefully fulfilled by people from within or formerly from Aroostook County.
- Third, to help our economy grow, it is important that we collectively reverse the 50 year downward population trend and retain more residents who will stay in the Aroostook County and raise their families here thus providing our existing businesses with a stable business base to remain in or grow their businesses.
- Fourth, this posted information will also be beneficial to former Aroostook County residents that have left the area, attained employment experience, and would like to return if they could find employment.

It is very common to hear at Aroostook County High School class reunions the comment that "we would like to come back home". That comment is usually followed by one or two stipulations: a) if we could get a good job here or b) after we retire. That is also an impression APP would like to change with this effort.

The Aroostook Partnership for Progress sees this effort as an important step both in helping our Aroostook County students gain a better understanding of the upcoming job potential and an essential element to the Aroostook's future economic growth. We would like to thank our Aroostook County businesses, High Schools and Colleges in advance for participating in this important effort. If you have any questions, comments, or associated ideas that would benefit this effort, please call Bob Dorsey at 493-5769.

Northern Maine Development Commission  
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