



**MaineToday.com**  
 Portland Press Herald  
 KENNEBEC JOURNAL  
 MAINE SUNDAY TELEGRAM  
 NEWS 8 WMTW

**WOLFE NEWS WIRE** The Pirana™ Breathing New Life Into Failed Septic Systems Across Region  
 Click here for news release

**MAINE PINE TREE ZONES**  
 Consider Maine's Pine Zones for your Business  
 Governor Baldacci Signs Pleasant River Lumber Dover-Foxcroft as New Pine Tree Zone Company

- HOME
- MAINEJOBS
- HOMES
- WHEELS
- MARKETPLACE
- NEWS
  - Local and State
  - Midday/4PM Reports
  - AP Wire
  - Base Closings
  - InDepth
  - Week in Photos
- WEATHER
  - 5-day Forecast
  - On the Ocean
- SPORTS
  - High Schools
  - Red Sox
  - Sea Dogs
  - Running
- BUSINESS
  - News
  - Doghouse Kitchen
  - Virtually Organized
  - Maine News Direct
  - Classifieds
- ENTERTAINMENT
  - Calendar
  - Movies
  - Dining
  - Music
  - Theater
  - Art
- TRAVEL
  - Maine Regions
  - From Away
  - Vacation Rentals
  - Lodging Guide
- OUTDOORS
  - Fishing
  - Hiking
  - Paddling Trips
  - With Children
  - Campground Guide
- BLOGS
  - Food for Thought
  - Doghouse Kitchen
  - Trail Head
  - More blogs
- 20 BELOW
  - Teen Blogs
  - 20 Below 20
  - Bulletin Board
- MAINEJOBS

**Portland Press Herald** EST. 1869 **Maine Sunday Telegram**

Home • News • Sports • Business • Editorials • Nemitz  
 Obituaries • Special Reports • Classifieds • Home Delivery

Thursday, June 2, 2005

[E-mail this story to a friend](#)

**Matching accounts go toward education**

By MATT WICKENHEISER, Portland Press Herald Writer

Copyright © 2005 Blethen Maine Newspapers Inc.

State officials have launched a new program to make it easier for Maine workers to pursue further training or education.

The Lifelong Learning Accounts (LiLA) program works as sort of a 401(k) program, where employees invest in employer-matched accounts. But instead of going toward retirement, the money goes to cover the costs of the worker's education.

Government and industry officials said Wednesday that the program could help both individuals and the economy as a whole by making workers more productive and better matching workers' skills to the needs of business. The program

ADVERTISEMENT

**Today's Question**

Each day, we ask MaineToday.com readers for their reactions to events in the news:



**Lifelong Learning Accounts**  
 The Lifelong Learning Accounts (LiLAs) program provides individual-asset accounts to finance education and training designed to help workers upgrade their skills. Through LiLA accounts, employers match employee contributions in a program that is similar to a 401(k) or health insurance program, but for education and training. Recent grants would allow such accounts to be available in Maine. Would you participate in a LiLA account?

No: 45.95%  
 Yes: 38.92%



Ground is broken on the \$5 million expansion project at Pleasant River

**Incentive Program**  
 business equipment tax reimbursement  
 job training  
 financing programs  
 80% Employment tax Increment Financing  
 100% refund of corporate Income and insurance premium t  
 local option Tax Increment Financing  
 100% sales and use tax exemption for zo related construction materials and equipment purchase  
[www.mainebiz.com](http://www.mainebiz.com)

**top MaineJobs**

- Social Services
- Executive Director Ac...
- Educational Help
- Maine School Administr...
- Professional
- STATE OF MAINE Departm...
- Health Care

Search Jobs  
Post a Job  
News and Resources  
Employer Profiles

**HOMES**

Classifieds  
Advice and Info  
Featured Agents  
Moving to Maine  
Retiring in Maine

**WHEELS**

Classifieds  
Resources and Info  
Featured Dealers

**MILESTONES**

Celebrations  
Obituaries

**MARKETPLACE**

Classifieds  
Special Sections

**ADVERTISING**

5 Reasons  
Advertising Products

**HELP CENTER**

Press Herald  
Sunday Telegram  
Kennebec Journal  
Morning Sentinel  
MaineToday.com



Network Affiliate

doesn't have the tax advantages of a 401(k), but does provide a vehicle for regular savings.

"All of us experience the need for continually trained skilled workers," said Lisa G. Martin, executive director of the Maine Metal Products Association. "It gives the employee new opportunities to explore further education and it gives the employer a chance to contribute - they get a smarter employee."

The Maine Department of Labor received \$200,000 from the Ford Foundation and \$428,000 from the U.S. Department of Labor to run the two-year pilot program.

LILA initiatives are taking place in Illinois, California, Oklahoma and Indiana, but this is the first time the U.S. Labor Department has funded a project. Additionally, Maine's pilot is the first attempt at a statewide program. The LILA model was created by the Council for Adult & Experiential Learning.

"We are excited about the potential of this program in Maine, which we think can be another strong example of how Lifelong Learning Accounts can work around the country," said Pamela Tate, president and chief executive officer of CAEL, in a statement.

"In most cases, public policy is more likely to address the needs of the unemployed for new jobs," she said. "The LILA program will show how we can bring lifelong learning within the reach of people already in the work force."

The state Labor Department will use the money to get the program up and running and to administer it, said Larinda Meade, director of the Bureau of Employment Services. The savings funds will be set up through the Finance Authority of Maine's Next Generation 529 accounts, traditionally used to save money for college funds, Meade said.

"An educated and well-trained work force is key to the economic prosperity of Maine," said Labor Commissioner Laura Fortman, in a statement. "As technology and globalization continue to change the types of jobs in our economy and the way we do work, this initiative provides opportunities for adult workers to upgrade and adapt their skills so that they can remain a competitive part of our work force."

The state has targeted three industry sectors to take part in the LILA program - information technology, hospitality and precision manufacturing. The goal is to have 350 individuals in individual

Undecided: 15.14%

Total Votes: 185

This survey is not scientific. The results are a snapshot of what readers who choose to take the survey are thinking. It is designed to allow readers to interact with the news of the day, and is not intended to be used for reference purposes.

The survey questions are created daily by the MaineToday.com staff. If you have questions, comments or suggestions about the online survey, you can [e-mail us](#) or call MaineToday.com editor Scott Hersey at (207) 822-4061.

See the results of past questions from the past seven days and find out about how the survey works, check [Previous Days' Questions](#).

[To top of story](#)

[Northern Maine Medical...](#)  
[Career Counseling](#)  
[jobhunting.com](#) Many exe...  
Professional  
[SECRETARY](#) Full-time Reg...  
Skilled Trades  
[We're Growing! Pine S...](#)  
Educational Help  
[\\*\\*Bates College](#) COORDIN...  
Professional  
[REAL ESTATE PROFESSIO](#)  
Health Care  
[NURSE PRACTITIONER](#) Ger

**MORE TOP JOB**



**Make New Not Work.**  
Make your news statewide in minutes

For Immediate  
Contact  
Contact Us  
MaineToday.com  
800-833-3333  
www.mainejobs.com

the Maine Public  
Relations Council MaineToday

LILA accounts over the next two years, Meade said.

The Department of Labor would help companies that want to take part in the program work with FAME, said Meade. Counselors at the state's CareerCenter network and at Maine Centers for Women, Work and Community will work with employees to figure out what sort of education they want and how to save for it.

The need for educated workers in the targeted sectors is critical, labor officials said. The state is working with the information-technology group MESDA, the Maine Metal Products Association and the Maine Innkeepers Association in the program.

Martin said there are between 500 and 600 open jobs in Maine for skilled metal workers, including trades such as machinist and welder. New technologies and tools are entering the workplace constantly, said Martin at the Metals Group, and fresh training is critical.

Likewise in the computer field, said Joseph F. Kumiszczka Jr., executive director of MESDA.

"The big thing is always continuing education, that's pretty much the bottom line for me," he said. "It's a way to get folks to invest in their own future."

Meade said the state was putting the program together now and hoped to have it running by September.

*Staff Writer Matt Wickenheiser can be contacted at 791-6316 or at:*

[mwickenheiser@pressherald.com](mailto:mwickenheiser@pressherald.com)

[To top of page](#)

Credibility is our business, and we strive for accurate and complete reports. **If you were interviewed** as a source for this news story, you are invited to [fill out an accuracy survey](#). We have been mailing such surveys to news sources for years and now offer this online option as well. All surveys will be verified, so please include the requested personal information.

## Portland Press Herald / Maine Sunday Telegram

### Today's Top Business Headlines


- [Dads now trail moms in gifts](#)
- [Price angst showing among oil customers](#)

[More business headlines](#)


### Home Delivery

Subscribe to the Maine Sunday Telegram for just \$1.25 a week for 12 weeks and save 44% off the newsstand price!



 Sign up for **daily headlines** by e-mail from the Portland Press Herald/Maine Sunday Telegram.

or visit the [signup page](#)

 Search the **archives** of the Portland Press Herald/Maine Sunday Telegram