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Quote

"Tonight, the president laid out an agenda for prosperity that targets America's greatest economic asset: a robust, productive middle class. Making sure that working families can afford child care, that they don't have to choose between keeping their job or caring for a sick child, and that their historic levels of productivity are rewarded with higher wages should be priorities that lawmakers on both sides of the aisle can get behind. This should be true in Washington and

Dear MECEP Friend,

A New Year brings a new class of legislators to the state house with a new biennial budget at the top of their agenda. And that means it's time for MECEP's 2015 tax and budget conference, this year featuring Center on Budget and Policy Priorities director of state fiscal research Michael Leachman. We've also welcomed Alex McAuliff as a new member to our staff team and Karen Heck and John Piotti to our board. And the Maine media and Maine policymakers continue to look to MECEP for reliable research and analysis.



Register Now for MECEP's 2015 Tax and Budget Conference

2015 MECEP Tax and Budget Conference



Keynote speaker

Michael Leachman

Director of State Fiscal Research
Center on Budget and Policy Priorities

Friday, February 13, 2015

Our state budget is a reflection of the choices we make together to strengthen our communities and build a vibrant economy. Join us to discuss the governor's proposed budget, evaluate the choices it represents, assess its impact on Maine, and consider alternatives that advance economic justice and prosperity for all Maine people.

Same day registration will be at 8:30 a.m. The conference will begin at 9:00 a.m. and end at 2:30 p.m. at Hallowell's Maple Hill Farm conference center. The \$50 registration fee includes lunch and break refreshments. To register in advance online, [click here](#).

Alex McAuliff Joins MECEP as Our New Development and Outreach Coordinator

here in Maine as well."

*Garrett Martin, executive director, Maine Center for Economic Policy, in the **Portland Press Herald**, January 21, 2015*

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A 2013 Colby College graduate and Waterville native, Alex joined MECEP in December 2014 after working as a legislative aide in the Maine state senate president's office.



Alex McAuliff

Alex has also served as a counselor at Seeds of Peace in Otisfield, Maine. In 2012, she attended the School of International Training's Development Studies Program in Kampala, Uganda.

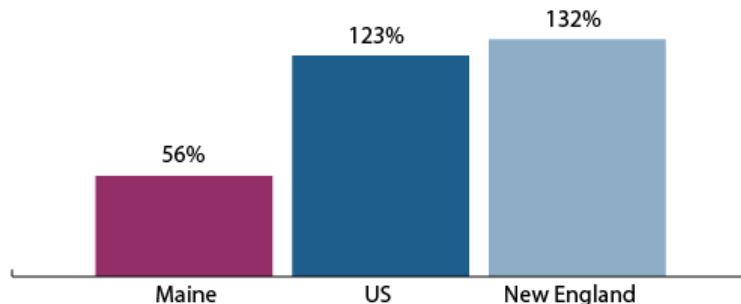
Alex hit the ground running, organizing the logistics and promotion for MECEP's 2015 tax and budget conference. She is also helping maintain more consistent communications with MECEP supporters while reaching out to a broader audience.

Latest on Maine's Economy and Medicaid Expansion

As the U.S. economy gathers steam, Maine remains behind the nation in jobs recovered since the Great Recession and even further behind New England as a whole.

Maine's Jobs Recovery Trails the Nation and New England

Percent Recovery of Jobs Lost During the Recession



Maine's jobs recovery ranks 46th among states. Maine needs an additional 11,100 jobs just to return to pre-recession employment levels.

Maine would have 16,900 more jobs if it had kept pace with the national recovery, and 19,200 more jobs if it had kept pace with the New England recovery.

Source: MECEP Analysis of November 2014 Nonfarm Payroll Job Estimates from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics

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Since January 1, 2014, Gov. LePage's refusal to accept federal Affordable Care Act funds to provide coverage to tens of thousands of uninsured Mainers has cost the state more than \$350 million.

MAINE MEDICAID COUNTER

TAKE BACK OUR TAX DOLLARS

\$356,045,345.29

Since January 1, 2014, Maine has rejected over \$900,000 per day that would provide coverage to 70,000 uninsured people.

We can make a better choice.

The total amount Maine has lost and can never recover as of January 20, 2015

 Maine Center for Economic Policy | mecep.org

Karen Heck, John Piotti Are New MECEP Board Members

MECEP recently welcomed former Waterville mayor Karen Heck and former state legislator John Piotti to our board of directors. Together they have more than 40 years of experience in Maine public policy development.

Heck is currently a senior program officer for the Bingham Program, a philanthropy investing in the health of Maine people. For 25 years, she has worked both locally and statewide for a variety of causes and countless programs including co-founding Hardy Girls Healthy Women, Inc. Heck recently completed three years as Waterville's mayor.



Karen Heck

Piotti, president and CEO of Maine Farmland Trust, has been at the forefront of agricultural issues in Maine for 20 years. He holds three degrees from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT): in engineering, public policy, and management. Piotti also served in Maine's legislature, where he chaired the agriculture and taxation committees and later served as House Majority Leader.



John Piotti

MECEP Blogposts Continue to Inform Policy Deliberations

As the new legislature begins its deliberations, MECEP staff blog posts are providing valuable research and analysis, especially regarding the governor's budget and tax proposals.

[EITC Awareness Day: To Receive It, You Have to Claim It](#)
(January 29, 2015)

[Maine Capital Investment Credit: A Bogus "Bonus" Maine Can't Afford](#) (January 28, 2015)

[The Maine Capital Investment Credit \("Bonus Depreciation"\) is an Ineffective and Unnecessary Giveaway to Large Businesses](#)(January 28, 2015)

[Economist predicts slow and uneven economic growth in 2015](#) (January 23, 2015)

[Educational Opportunity: Opening Doors to Prosperity from Someone Who Knows](#) (January 20, 2015)

[Maine Jobs Recovery Continues to Trail the Nation and New England](#) (December 19, 2014)

[Maine's Injured and Disabled Workers: A Humanitarian Challenge and an Economic Opportunity](#) (December 15, 2014)



MECEP in the News



"Fred Turner worked hard at the Bucksport mill to make the American dream reality..."

In a very special **Bangor Daily News** op ed, Christy Daggett discusses her great grandfather's legacy and how recent mill closings signal a sea change in Maine's economy affecting families like hers statewide.

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Another Maine mill closes, and MECEP looks at how it resonates across the state and its implications for our economic policies. Several states, including Maine are "taking aim" at nutrition assistance programs, and **The New Republic** asks MECEP why. Gov. LePage releases his budget proposal for the 127th Maine legislature, President Obama delivers his State of the Union address, and Maine's media and policymakers turn to MECEP for our analysis. It's business as usual for MECEP.

[Stricter federal laws needed to rein in unscrupulous payday lenders](#) (**Kennebec Journal**, January 29, 2015)

[Portland mayor concedes minimum wage won't happen this year](#) (**The Forecaster**, January 26, 2015)

[Maine Sunday Telegram analysis: LePage plan will reduce tax burden for most Maine workers](#) (**Maine Sunday**

Telegram, January 25, 2015)

[Obama's tuition, tax-cut plans praised in Maine](#) (**Portland Press Herald**, January 21, 2015)

[Maine politicians react to SOTU](#) (WCSH-TV, January 21, 2015)

[Colonoscopies for \\$3,166 or \\$721: Why finding out is progress](#) (**Bangor Daily News**, January 21, 2015)

[Republican Governors to Food-Stamp Recipients: Get a Job Already!](#) (**The New Republic**), January 15, 2015)

[Interview about Gov. LePage's proposed budget](#) (WZON-AM *The Pulse Morning program*, January 14, 2015)

[What can Maine taxpayers expect from LePage's tax reform plan?](#) (**Bangor Daily News**, January 13, 2015)

[Five Maine economists give us their 2015 outlook](#) (**Maine Biz**, January 12, 2015)

[Interview about Gov. LePage's Proposed Budget](#) ((WVOM-AM/FM's *The George Hale-Ric Tyler Program*, January 12, 2015)

[LePage's budget aims to make big changes in the state's tax code](#) (**Portland Press Herald**, January 9, 2015)

[LePage launches second term with promises of job growth and a stronger economy](#) (Lewiston **Sun Journal**, January 7, 2015)

[Fred Turner worked hard at the Bucksport mill to make the American dream reality](#) (**Bangor Daily News**, January 3, 2015)

[Kicking people off food stamps doesn't make them less impoverished or employed](#) (**Bangor Daily News** editorial, January 2, 2015)

Be sure to keep up with MECEP on social media: "like" us on [Facebook, \(click here\)](#) and "follow" us on [Twitter, \(click here\)](#). And read the latest posts to [MECEP's blog \(click here\)](#) for more detailed information on our ongoing research and analysis of issues in the news.

Sincerely,

Mark Sullivan
Maine Center for Economic Policy