

Summary of Maine's North Star Alliance Initiative (NSAI) Objectives

The North Star Alliance (NSA) is an industry-led collaborative, synthesizing business, research and development, and economic development resources to re-skill the workforce and launch a new regional economy in Maine. Seizing on recent research and development in composite and advanced material technologies, the NSA embarks on a multi-faceted approach to leverage these successes across a wide variety of industries including boat building, marine and waterfront infrastructure, building products, sporting good products, ballistic armor, and a multitude of marine-related service and support industries. This strategy focuses on building capacity and addressing gaps in four different areas—called in the NSA the Four Pillars of Economic Development. Each of these Pillars will be managed by a designated individual. Briefly, the Pillars are identified as follows:

Market Development (Pillar I)

Although recent research and development has resulted in new market opportunities for industries in this sector, current marketing resources are limited. Marketing and commercialization of new products in this sector must be expanded to realize both near and far-term market opportunities and ensure stable and diverse growth.

Research and Development (Pillar II)

Current market opportunities exist in part because of Maine's strong commitment to R&D through institutions such as the Maine Technology Institute and the University of Maine's Advanced Engineering Wood Composites Center. Fierce market competition and short product life require continuous research and innovation.

Workforce Development (Pillar III)

Transformation of the regional economy and the success of this sector depend on a uniquely talented workforce. To meet skills and workforce demands, Maine must address the pool of trained workers, retrain unemployed workers, and expand awareness about industry career opportunities within Maine's school-age population. In addition, highly educated technical researchers and entrepreneurs need to be supported within Maine and attracted from outside of the state.

Each of the four Local Workforce Development Boards in Maine will be staffed by a NSA Workforce Pillar Liaison position.

Workforce outcomes are identified as follows:

Number of Jobs Created: 2,000

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Entered Employment Rate: 97%

Earnings Gain at Six Months: \$3,100

Employment Retention Rate at Six Months: 95%

Employment Credential Rate: 88%

Number of New Apprentices: 500

Number of New Business Start Ups: 200

Capitalization and Infrastructure Development (Pillar IV)

The NSA, under the leadership of the Department of Economic and Community Development and philanthropic and investment partners throughout the state, will be convened to develop strategies to produce capital for business and industry growth, facility improvement and expansion, and the acquisition of supplies needed for training and manufacturing.