
The Importance of Partnership in CDA Success – Maine’s Story

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my **Alfond** *grant*

Inspiring families to invest
in their children’s future

The My Alfond Grant Program – Our Story



Harold Alfond believed that all children deserve the opportunity to achieve higher education, and he recognized that one of the biggest barriers to attending college is cost. So, he created this gift of the \$500 Alfond Grant as a great start to help families begin to prepare for higher education from the very start of a child's life.

He believed that you could transform individual families and the state's future prosperity by helping Maine's children aspire to higher education.

MyAlfondGrant is his legacy gift to every Maine baby to help make that future prosperity a reality.

The My Alfond Grant Program – Our Model

- Automatic, universal, statewide, at birth (started as opt-in program)
- \$500 Alfond Grant invested @ birth for every Maine resident baby
- \$55m invested so far from the program – which has leveraged another \$99m in family contributions
- Program funds are invested in an omnibus 529 account owned by ASF & families open their own accounts for their own contributions

Partnerships from the Beginning

- **Funding Partners**

- Harold Alfond Foundation is, for all intents and purposes, the sole funder
- Other foundations provide additional incentive grants or research support

- **Hospital Partners**

- Hospital Champions - trusted by families – share information with new parents while they are in the hospital
- Encourage Contact Card completion

- **Community Partners**

- Family-serving organizations (Head Start Programs, CAP Agencies, libraries, housing authorities, YWCAs/YMCAs) – trusted by families – share information and materials, connect families with questions

Developing Partnerships

■ **Business Partnerships**

- Offer payroll deduction for college savings to employees as part of annual election of benefits
- Some also offer their own matching grant
- Renewed focus on growing this program, finding ways to add value to Employers and Employees

■ **State Agency Partnerships**

- DHHS
 - Embedding information about the Alford Grant in family interactions
 - Training for staff (WIC, Home Visiting)
 - Share messages important to DHHS with families (eg Safe Sleep)
- DOE
 - Invest in ME-Kindergarten initiative & alignment with Maine Learning Standards
 - Aspirations Team

Unofficial Partnerships Matter, too

