



Fund Connection Login



About MaineCF | Real Time: A Community Building Blog

Board | Reviewer | Staff Login

Home

About MaineCF

- About MaineCF
- News Highlights
- Community Foundation Grants at Work
- Community Voices
- Real Time: A Community Building Blog
- Publications
- Financial Information & Tax Returns
- What is a Community Foundation?
- Philanthropy Glossary
- Board of Directors
- Staff
- Employment Opportunities
- Annual Report
- County and Regional Funds

For Maine

For Donors

For Professional Advisors

Nonprofit Endowments

Grants

Scholarships

Contact Information

Real Time: A Community Building Blog

Welcome to Real Time, a community building blog that seeks to provoke thought, encourage conversation, and help our friends and colleagues understand what goes on "behind the scenes" at the Maine Community Foundation.

Measures of America—and Maine

APR 7 Written by: Meredith Jones 4/7/2014 11:21 AM

My weekday commute is just shy of 80 miles round trip, affording me an abundance of thinking and radio listening time between Belfast and Ellsworth. These past few weeks the "bonus," if you will, has been the larger-than-life frost heaves (a top-ten term for those of us in rural Maine) that impose themselves on mindless travelers at random intervals and require quick thinking brake and accelerator action.



Undaunted, I recently found myself monitoring the road condition and listening intently to a [story on National Public Radio's Marketplace](#) about a project, Measure of America, that has adapted the United Nations' Human Development Index (HDI) to the United States.

Unlike traditional economic measures such as GDP, the HDI measures three dimensions of human well-being: a long and healthy life, access to knowledge, and a decent standard of living. The core data consist of how long babies born in different communities and different states are expected to live; the level of educational attainment; and the wages and salaries of different ethnic groups. Simply put, the index offers compelling information that paints a

vivid and dynamic picture of our people.

The logic behind the project's focus is that people with high levels of human development can invest in themselves and their families and can live to their full potential—giving back to their communities as volunteers. Here are a few key findings:

- In 1960, the Human Development Index for the U.S. was 1.63 on a scale of 0–10. The average American could expect to live just under 70 years, was highly unlikely to have a bachelor's degree (7.7% did), and had median earnings of about \$19,000 in today's dollars.
- By 2013, the country's score had risen to 5.03, the average life expectancy increased by more than nine years, and adults are now nearly four times as likely to have a bachelor's degree.
- Two of the top five states on the index—Connecticut and Massachusetts—are in New England; all five at the bottom of the index—Alabama, Kentucky, West Virginia, Arkansas, and Mississippi—are in the South.

I was interested to learn where Maine stands, so I went to the [website](#) to learn more. I was most interested in knowing how we compare to our neighboring states in northern New England. Here's what I learned:

- Maine's overall HDI score is 4.93, below the national score of 5.03 and lower than Vermont (5.31) and New Hampshire (5.73).
- Our life expectancy at birth is 79.2 years, lower than Vermont (80.5) and New Hampshire (80.3).

Subscribe

Subscribe to the Real Time blog via RSS, or follow the community foundation on Facebook for instant notification of new posts.



About the Author



Meredith Jones is president and CEO of the Maine Community Foundation.

Photo, Fred J. Field

Subscribe

Enter your e-mail address below to get community foundation news in your Inbox.

Email Address:

Subscribe

Search

- Keywords
- Phrase

Search

Archive

- 3. Our median earnings are \$26,621, slightly lower than Vermont (\$27,111) and lower than New Hampshire (\$32,207).
- 4. Our education score is 5.08, lower than Vermont (5.59) and New Hampshire (5.70).

What does the data tell us? While we all aspire to enjoy a high quality of life—in other words, a high score on the Human Development Index—the evidence suggests there is a strong correlation between and among educational attainment, wages and salaries, and health status. Is there a more compelling reason to help all Maine people successfully pursue higher education and credential attainment? I suspect not. What do you think?

Location: [Blogs](#) ▶ [Real Time](#)

[Trackback](#) [Print](#)

[2 comment\(s\) so far...](#)



Re: Measures of America—and Maine

I am very impressed by what local Northeast Harbor YR residents did in the 40/50s. They were entrepreneurs without knowing it. They made elegant things for the summer people (too fancy for me!) but "just did it!" I was here then, but not aware of them as part of my life. (I did go to stores with my father: clocks/bank/barber/Holmes.

By Sydney Roberts Rockefeller on 4/18/2014 5:33 AM



Re: Measures of America—and Maine

This is a very interesting analysis but what is missing is comparison to other developed countries. Introspection is good but until we look beyond our borders we will never know how we are truly advancing with equality and equity for all.

The Commonwealth Fund do this with healthcare comparisons which is a very interesting read. See link below.

www.commonwealthfund.org/Publications/Fund-Reports/2010/Jun/Mirror-Mirror-Update.aspx

By Edwina Ducker on 4/28/2014 1:10 PM

Your name:

Your email:

(Optional) Email used only to show [Gravatar](#).

Your website:

Title:

Comment:

[Add Comment](#) [Cancel](#)

- February, 2015 (1)
- January, 2015 (2)
- December, 2014 (4)
- November, 2014 (2)
- October, 2014 (3)
- September, 2014 (2)
- August, 2014 (4)
- July, 2014 (2)
- June, 2014 (3)
- May, 2014 (2)
- April, 2014 (2)
- March, 2014 (3)
- February, 2014 (2)
- January, 2014 (3)
- December, 2013 (3)
- November, 2013 (2)
- October, 2013 (2)
- September, 2013 (2)
- August, 2013 (2)
- July, 2013 (3)
- June, 2013 (2)
- May, 2013 (2)
- April, 2013 (2)
- March, 2013 (2)
- February, 2013 (2)
- January, 2013 (3)
- December, 2012 (2)
- November, 2012 (2)
- October, 2012 (3)
- September, 2012 (2)
- August, 2012 (3)
- July, 2012 (2)
- June, 2012 (3)
- May, 2012 (2)
- April, 2012 (3)
- March, 2012 (3)
- February, 2012 (2)
- January, 2012 (2)
- December, 2011 (2)
- November, 2011 (3)
- October, 2011 (2)
- September, 2011 (2)
- August, 2011 (3)
- July, 2011 (2)
- June, 2011 (1)
- May, 2011 (2)
- April, 2011 (2)
- March, 2011 (3)
- February, 2011 (2)
- January, 2011 (2)
- December, 2010 (2)
- November, 2010 (2)
- October, 2010 (2)
- September, 2010 (2)
- August, 2010 (2)
- July, 2010 (2)
- June, 2010 (1)
- May, 2010 (2)
- April, 2010 (2)
- March, 2010 (2)
- February, 2010 (3)
- January, 2010 (2)
- December, 2009 (2)
- November, 2009 (2)
- October, 2009 (2)
- September, 2009 (2)
- August, 2009 (2)
- July, 2009 (3)
- June, 2009 (4)
- May, 2009 (3)
- April, 2009 (4)

Blog List

- View All Recent Entries
- [Amy Pollien](#)
- [Bo Norris's Real Time blog](#)
- [Carl Little](#)
- [Cherie Galyean](#)
- [David Wood](#)
- [Ellen Pope's Real Time blog](#)
- [JaneA Kelley](#)
- [Jennifer Southard](#)
- [Kenneth Spirer](#)
- [Kevin Bolduc's REal Time blog](#)
- [Laura Young](#)
- [Liz Fickett's Real Time Blog](#)
- [Peter Taylor](#)
- [Real Time](#)