



Harold Alfond Legacy Creates New Generation of Investors

Nearly 8,000 Harold Alfond College Challenge Grants Awarded

Augusta, ME – Boden Brown of Scarborough shares late philanthropist Harold Alfond’s birthday on March 6, although Boden is just turning one and Mr. Alfond would have been 97 years old this year. Boden’s parents, Kathy and Casey Brown, share Mr. Alfond’s vision for Boden – that he and Remy, his 2 ½ year-old brother, will have the financial resources to go to college. “We were very excited to receive the Alfond Grant gift for Boden. We knew we wanted to start saving early for our boys’ college expenses, and the \$500 Alfond Grant enabled us to start sooner,” said Mrs. Brown.

Both of Boden’s parents attended college in Maine, but didn’t have college savings, so they had to pay or borrow as they went. They heard about the Harold Alfond College Challenge from other parents and health care professionals. “We looked at the projected costs of college and checked out the NextGen College Investing Plan[®] and knew it was the way we wanted to go,” said Mr. Brown, who is a CPA.

Mrs. Brown, who is a social worker, said, “We made it a priority to put \$50 per month for each boy in the budget. We could easily spend it on something else, but, given the high expected costs of college, we are committed to putting the money in each month so the boys can have options for college and careers.”

On the eve of what would have been Harold Alfond’s 97th birthday, the Alfond Scholarship Foundation has awarded nearly 8,000 grants of \$500 each to the families of Maine babies to start college investing accounts for them. With nearly 40% of eligible Maine babies participating in the program, the Alfond Scholarship Foundation is helping to create a whole new generation of investors planning for their children’s college educations.

Given the rising costs of a college education, Maine parents will need to save and invest more than ever before. By 2028, the average cost of a four-year education, including tuition and fees for in-state residents at a public university, is expected to rise from \$33,300 in 2010 and to \$95,000 in 2028, according to SavingForCollege.com. College costs are assumed to increase 6% annually.

“Mr. Alfond’s vision was that families, communities and businesses would rise to the challenge of investing in the educational aspirations of Maine’s children, and it’s happening,” said Elizabeth Vanderweide, program manager for the Harold Alfond College Challenge. “Of the nearly 8,000 NextGen College Investing Plan (NextGen) accounts created since the program’s inception, over 25% of those accounts have received additional contributions.”

The \$500 Alfond Grant is available to all Maine resident babies when a NextGen account is opened by their first birthday. There are no income limits and no contributions are required to receive the \$500 grant. Administered by the Finance Authority of Maine (FAME), funds in the NextGen account may be used to pay for qualified higher education expenses at any accredited post-secondary school, including four-year and two-year public and private colleges, certificate programs, trade schools, and even graduate schools.¹

Parents of Maine babies may apply for the grant by visiting <http://www.500forbaby.org> or calling FAME 1-800-282-3734 and completing an application prior to their child’s first birthday. To assist families with opening accounts, the Alfond Scholarship Foundation also hosts “Casting Calls” around the state. At a Casting Call, parents obtain a free professional photograph of their baby along with assistance in completing the NextGen application. Spring Casting Calls are currently scheduled for April 9, 2011 at the Bangor Mall and April 16, 2011 at the Wyndham Hotel in South Portland.

About the Alfond Scholarship Foundation

The Alfond Scholarship Foundation is a nonprofit corporation established specifically to sponsor and support the Harold Alfond College Challenge. This foundation is a partnership of organizations and individuals who truly embrace Mr. Alfond’s philosophy, and includes representatives from the Maine Compact for Higher Education, FAME, the

University of Maine System, the Maine Community College System, the Maine Community Foundation, the Mitchell Institute, and at-large members that include representatives from MaineGeneral Health and the Maine Hospital Association. To learn more about the Harold Alfond College Challenge, please visit www.500forbaby.org.

About the Finance Authority of Maine (FAME)

FAME is a quasi-independent state agency that provides innovative financial solutions to help Maine people and businesses pursue educational and business opportunities. Established in 1983, FAME is committed to innovative, flexible financial solutions that address the needs of Maine individuals and companies in a changing economic landscape. FAME administers the Harold Alfond College Challenge and the NextGen College Investing Plan.[®] To learn more about FAME, please visit www.famemaine.com

1 To be eligible for the favorable tax treatment afforded to any earnings portion of withdrawals from Section 529 accounts, such withdrawals must be used for “qualified higher education expenses,” as defined in the Internal Revenue Code. Any earnings withdrawn that are not used for such expenses are subject to federal income tax and may be subject to a 10% additional federal tax as well as state and local taxes.

2 Certain restrictions apply. Please see the Terms and Conditions for details.

Please remember there's always the potential of losing money when you invest in securities.

NextGen is a Section 529 plan administered by the Finance Authority of Maine (FAME). Before you invest in NextGen, request a NextGen Program Description from your Maine bank or financial advisor, or call FAME at 1-800-228-3734 and read it carefully. The Program Description contains more complete information, including investment objectives, charges, expenses and risks of investing in NextGen, which you should carefully consider before investing. You also should consider whether your home state or your designated beneficiary's home state offers any state tax or other benefits that are only available for investments in such state's 529 plan. Merrill Lynch, Pierce, Fenner & Smith Incorporated, a registered broker-dealer, Member [SIPC](#), is the program manager and underwriter.