

# The Roundtable

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## Breaking the Cycle

**T** Tyler Oversmith brought The Power of Possible to today's meeting. That power lodges in Fedcap, its Breaking the Cycle program that was officially launched in Maine with the opening of four Opportunity Centers.

Fedcap established the Breaking the Cycle program after Maine officials selected it to provide statewide services under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, called ASPIRE. The state had not met TANF work participation rates and believed Fedcap could do a better job. There are approximately 3000 TANF cases throughout Maine, and the state is committed to working with Fedcap to end poverty for these individuals, families and children.



Fedcap provides education and training that leads to sustainable employment, as well as connections to services for those with barriers to work.

Mr. Oversmith cited the low unemployment rate in Maine, and invited employers to contact him about possible well-trained individuals suitable for hiring.

The Breaking the Cycle program operates out of 16 Opportunity Centers. The four Centers are located in South Portland, Sanford, Lewiston and Skowhegan. The 12 remaining Opportunity Centers opened their doors on February 6th. A team of 145 employees will serve TANF families. A new proprietary case management system, FedcapCARES, will track Fedcap's performance for the state. The six-year, \$62 million contract marks the first time the State of Maine has contracted for management of its entire TANF program.

The Breaking the Cycle program commences with the state's TANF workforce participation rate at 16 percent. Fedcap's goal is a participation rate of 50 percent within 18 months. TANF has a five-year cash limit, so it is critical that recipients work to replace that income when the TANF funds stop.

“We help people navigate the employment process,” Mr. Oversmith said. “We advise what to say in a job interview, what not to say, resume preparation, writing the cover letter and a thank-you letter.”

### **What Else Happened**

The endorphin meter registered “high” as we heard birds singing and arrived in sunshine at the early hour. **Ken Nagle**, along with two of the Interact Club members told of their attendance at the District Conference in Quebec last weekend. Ken said our club was given an award for its Polio Plus contribution. Proceeds for the 2017/18 *All That Jazz* concerts contributed the funding. **John Quinn** said that this first-time attendance by Interact Leaders Club members was successful and they will be included in future conferences. Interact Club president Stacy said they heard a lot of French! Club members Jason said he met people from many countries.

**President June Kontio** reminded us of the photo contest to help with our exchange banner redesign. She confirmed that our annual dinner will be on June 20, 6 pm, at Four Points at the airport. **Ken Huhn**, who introduced our speaker, gave a Rotary Moment highlighting fundraising activities by clubs around the world.

Fines are in the spring air. **Paul Miragliuolo** said that we could be fined for cell phones ringing, not wearing our nametag or not wearing a Rotary pin. See **Karen Schaller** if you don't have a pin. (She will not fine you.)

The Birthday Duo sang the famous ode to **Christopher Swift**. **Larry Diehl's** cross-country drive to California with his son was fun and rewarding.

**Lisa Wahlstrom** promoted the current Penobscot Theatre production of “Fun Home.” She and Jeff have seen it twice.

**Pudge Harrison** had a problem-solving trip to Nepal, and back. He described a bus trip along narrow roads with 4,000-foot drops on the sides. He was exhausted and sound asleep when the bus bounced hard on the road, causing him to defy gravity and bang his head on a fan above him. Blood oozed. The driver came back and asked him, “Did you break my fan?”



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