FY20 was a year divided. The first half was not unlike other years: we worked hard, celebrated milestones and embraced the opportunity to work with partners on community initiatives. We provided services in support of our strategic goals to assist Maine people to achieve economic security, stable housing, reliable transportation, school readiness and healthy lives. We celebrated the 20th anniversary of our subsidiary MaineStream Finance. We proudly joined the Housing Partnership Network to increase our national network of housing and community developers. We partnered with Northern Light Mercy Hospital to support mothers in recovery at the newly established McAuley House. And we once again joined with our media partners and communities to help families facing financial hardship enjoy the holiday season.

The second half of the year was like nothing we had ever experienced, a rollercoaster ride that we shared not only with the state and nation but also with the entire world. The COVID-19 pandemic touched all of our lives and its impact was profound. Our hearts were heavy, saddened by so much loss: the loss of social connections, the loss of livelihood, the loss of life. The health and well-being of our families, friends, coworkers and community members weighed on our minds.

Initially the focal point of the nation’s fear and confusion, the pandemic would months later provide a backdrop for issues of division and social injustice. But any concerns about the strength of our region’s social fabric were quickly allayed. Our spirits were lifted by the generosity, compassion and resolve of our staff, volunteers, partners and communities. Our staff and volunteers worked tirelessly to keep essential services open. Our partners worked collaboratively to ensure people, especially those most vulnerable to illness, were safe and had their basic needs met. Our communities rallied, with individuals, families, businesses, foundations and government agencies providing support to alleviate the pandemic’s devastating financial and emotional toll.

Numerous challenges facing our communities persist. Still, we are optimistic. We have a remarkable team of talented, dedicated and caring individuals. We will be working on solutions alongside individuals and institutions with extraordinary heart and fortitude. And the members of our communities are exceptionally kind and generous. They open their hearts. They work in service of others. They give their time. They give their financial support. Together, there is nothing we cannot accomplish.

We are proud to be a part of our communities and grateful for the opportunity to work together to help children thrive, families flourish, businesses succeed and communities prosper. We look forward to a future where all Maine people are safe, healthy, connected and financially secure.
Penquis subsidiary MaineStream Finance turned 20 in 2020! The community development financial institution (CDFI) engaged in several new and exciting endeavors. It was selected to take part in a national pilot program with the Credit Builder Alliance (CBA) and JP Morgan Chase to help formerly incarcerated citizens transition back into public life by improving their personal finances and credit scores. MaineStream launched a new loan product for manufactured homes (formerly known as mobile homes), and, to respond to needs arising from the pandemic, MaineStream initiated a new rental counseling and eviction prevention program.

Penquis worked with the public and private sectors to address challenges faced by families as a result of COVID-19. Penquis was one of ten community action agencies across the state that received funding from the Maine Department of Health and Human Services to support individuals required to isolate or self-quarantine due to COVID-19 but lacked the natural social supports to do so safely. Penquis also administered MaineHousing’s Rental Relief Program for Penobscot, Piscataquis and Knox counties to provide rent relief to households that could not pay their rent due to COVID-19. For needs that could not be addressed by existing programs, Penquis established a COVID-19 Basic Needs Fund that used donations to assist individuals and families with a variety of expenses, including car repair, food and medicine delivery, and accessories for remote learning.

Penquis partnered with Northern Light Mercy Hospital to open a new transitional housing program in Bangor for mothers in recovery. The program, known as McAuley House, serves women in recovery who have their children in their care or are working towards reunification. Women can reside in the house and participate in programming for up to two years, moving through varying levels of support as they increase self-sufficiency and become stronger in their recovery.

Penquis joined the Housing Partnership Network (HPN), an award-winning business collaborative of 100 of the nation’s leading affordable housing and community development nonprofits. HPN members use housing as a driver of outcomes across key areas such as education, economic development, transportation, and health.

“Many hands make light work” proved true in FY20. Through the kindness and generosity of our staff, volunteers and community, we provided 609 pairs of socks for individuals in shelters, 1,248 pounds of pasta and sauce to help those facing food insecurity, 1,200 backpacks filled with school supplies for children starting a new school year, 6,000 individual diapers to assist 200 families, 5,200 turkeys that were distributed to 43 partners, and holiday gifts for nearly 1,200 children.
"We seriously could not have done this without you. We have wanted [to own a home] for so long and you made it happen for us. We're forever in your debt!"
12,391 individuals were assisted with their transportation needs

12,188 bus passes and tickets were issued

163,010 taxi trips helped to meet transit needs

203 volunteer drivers traveled 5,699,030 miles transporting people to where they needed to go

10,679,953 miles were traveled to get people to their destinations

506 children received quality care and early education that supported healthy child development and allowed parents to work or pursue an education

- 351 children received Head Start services
- 142 children received Early Head Start services
- 13 received child care services

98 providers received reimbursement for food expenses to lessen the cost of serving healthy meals

207 parents of young children received parenting information and support

“Penquis Child Development has been one of the biggest blessings for our family in the midst of [the pandemic]... that brought a lot of peace to us as parents knowing [our daughter] was in a safe clean environment all while Covid took over.”

“I’m not allowed to drive out of the town limits because of my eyes, so this program was very useful for me. I could go see my husband of 67 years in the nursing home.”

School Readiness
“[Homeless Outreach] has been helpful in so many different ways...From physically helping me with scholarships for college and health insurance, to just giving me a shoulder to lean on. Sometimes, you just need someone who’s going to be in your corner.”

Healthy Lives

225 adults age 55+ volunteered in their communities
103 individuals received daily support to live independently
147 victims/survivors of interpersonal violence received assistance with family law matters and 48 received legal representation
129 youth received services to improve wellbeing and increase leadership skills
1,597 K-12 youth received education from Rape Response Services to improve safety
5 pregnant/parenting homeless youth received transitional housing services
144 families received children’s advocacy services in cases of suspected child sexual abuse
143 families were connected to support and resources to reduce the need for child protective intervention
71 men learned about the dynamics of power and control to decrease the use of violence in relationships
64 children with a mental health diagnosis or intellectual disability received services to improve behavior and functioning
77 individuals received counseling to improve quality of life and functional abilities
323 families with children in DHHS custody received supportive visitation services and 38 received parent coaching and home-based visits
54 individuals with acquired brain injuries, intellectual disability or behavioral health diagnosis received residential services
5 adults with cognitive and developmental disabilities acquired long-term residential living arrangements
33 individuals with disabilities received community integration support
2 adults with developmental disabilities received life skill services
343 individuals received behavioral health treatment plans
98 individuals received comprehensive case management services
1,200 children received backpacks and school supplies to start the new school year
200 families received diapers and wipes
5,200 families enjoyed a Thanksgiving meal
1,200 children received holiday gifts

COVID-19 Supports

22,627 meals were provided to families
2,362 people received rent relief
11 families received emergency utility payments
6 individuals received emergency clothing assistance
7 families were assisted with vehicle-related expenses
1 family received home repair assistance
62 families received assistance to isolate safely
Penquis gratefully acknowledges the following major funding sources for 2019-20 and the many individuals, businesses, foundations and civic, faith-based and community organizations that make our work possible.

Aroostook County Action Program
Aroostook Mental Health Center
Bangor Fuel Society
Brewer Community School
Corporation for National and Community Service
Eastern Area Agency on Aging
Hannaford Supermarkets
Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Foundation
John T. Gorman Foundation
Maine Cancer Foundation
Maine Coalition Against Sexual Assault
Maine Community Foundation
Maine Health Access Foundation
Maine State Housing Authority
Maine Veterans of Foreign Wars
Medway/East Millinocket School District
NeighborWorks America
Northern Light Mayo Hospital
Piscataquis County Jail
RSU 13
State of Maine Bureau of Consumer Credit Protection
State of Maine Department of Corrections
State of Maine Department of Economic and Community Development
State of Maine Department of Environmental Protection
State of Maine Department of Health and Human Services
State of Maine Department of Transportation
TD Bank Charitable Foundation
The Opportunity Alliance
U.S. Department of Agriculture
U.S. Department of Energy
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
U.S. Department of Justice
U.S. Health Resources & Services Administration
U.S. Small Business Administration
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Western Maine Community Action
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