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## Financial Firm Grows Beyond its Aroostook County Roots

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On his road to success, Marcus Barresi didn't burn any bridges but built stronger ones with his reputation for hard work and integrity. That work ethic paved the way for the Fort Kent native to expand his financial services company throughout Maine.

Headquartered in Presque Isle for the last 26 years, Barresi Financial Inc., a comprehensive employee benefits & financial services company with 10 employees, now has additional offices in Bangor, Auburn and Scarborough.

"I can truly say that the start up of Barresi Financial in Presque Isle and its expansion throughout Maine came from those initial relationships that I established with Longley & Associates in 1979," stated Barresi, a 1976 graduate of St. Joseph's College in Windham with a bachelor's degree in business administration.

In 1979, former Governor James Longley recruited Barresi to work with Longley & Associates, a benefits and financial services company based in Auburn.

When Lloyd Greenlaw, a Longley & Associates affiliate in Presque Isle, wanted to retire, Barresi returned home to Aroostook County and joined his agency. He eventually took over the servicing of Greenlaw's clients and started his own practice. While maintaining an affiliation with Healy Associates, the firm that acquired Longley Associates after Gov. Longley died in 1980. Barresi's agency was a sole proprietorship until he incorporated it as Barresi Financial Inc. in 1993.

In 2000, Barresi expanded his agency to Bangor when James Halkett, formerly of Longley & Associates, wanted to retire and make sure that his clients were well taken care of. Barresi did the same in 2004 by merging with Loretta Dyer, owner of the Murch & Dyer Agency in Auburn. This merger provides Dyer's clients with seamless continuity while she streamlines her workload over the next several years.

"We're well established in northern Maine, and find that our name and reputation precede us as we work our way south. We're honored that a good number of Aroostook County natives, who have relocated, recommend us to their business associates and friends," Barresi commented.

Nathan Berry, Barresi Financial's Director of Finance, noted that the company "is looking to grow to another level" and hire two more financial services representatives. "As we service group benefits needs of businesses, we also promote financial education through seminars and print information. Many employees of our corporate clients also become our individual clients," he added, noting that Barresi Financial helps people prepare for the many financial aspects in their lives, such as college savings, retirement, emergency savings, and life insurance.

Barresi Financial takes a holistic approach to insurance and investment strategies which includes a needs assessment, portfolio strategies, service and support.

"We're honored that our corporate clients are so willing to allow us to work with their employees on an individual basis. But we've found that when employees address and resolve some of the major financial issues in their lives, they truly become more productive in the workplace," says Barresi.

Marcus Barresi started constructing another bridge on January 1, 2005, to ensure a bright future for the company he founded 26 years ago. He began an ownership transfer, where two of his employees, Berry and Scott Boucher, Barresi Financial's Director of Operations, became part owners and will gradually buy Barresi out over time.

Both men started working for Barresi Financial as college interns and came to work for the firm full time in 1998 as Accounts Managers. The firm also employs Joy Pierce, Nancy Brewer, Beth Williams and Margaret Collins in Presque Isle; Jennifer Haas in Bangor; Mimi Houle and Shawn Brennan in Auburn.

"Marcus is a strong advocate of closely held businesses and having a continuity plan. Our plan is to continue providing our high level of expertise with integrity to our clients and searching for similar expansion opportunities," Boucher stated. "Our goal will always be to work hard and put our clients first."