



# 30<sup>th</sup>

# Anniversary Celebration



**MAINE**  
INTERNATIONAL TRADE CENTER



**MAINE INTERNATIONAL TRADE CENTER**  
*Global Resources. Local Expertise.*



Maine International  
Trade Center

1996 - 2026

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## Our Role

Maine International Trade Center (MITC) is Maine's leading source for international business assistance. MITC offers customized consulting, research, and an extensive network of connections across Maine and around the world to help businesses expand global markets for their products and services.

A public-private partnership, MITC is supported financially by more than 200 businesses and organizations, corporate sponsors, and the Maine Department of Economic & Community Development (DECD). MITC members include manufacturers, service providers, and educational institutions located in all 16 Maine counties. While our members support the organization through annual membership dues, MITC provides assistance to any Maine business whether members or non-members. We work with both exporters and importers.

## MITC President's Letter

Dear Partners, Members, Friends, and Clients:

Asking a history major to 'sum up' 30 years of Maine International Trade Center was always going to be a dangerous proposition. Where does one even start with a task like that? Especially when that 30 years is so deeply intertwined with your own personal and career growth?

Few people can remember where they were when they first heard about Maine International Trade Center. I can – it was October 21, 1996. It was day one of a drenching rain and windstorm that knocked out power and, for a while, even the water in the City of Portland. It was my first day of work with Jeff Porter at the US Commercial Service office, at the Portland Chamber of Commerce in a role that was ostensibly "network administrator." Jeff wasn't sure quite what to do with me yet, so within a couple of days I found myself working with the brand new MITC team helping out on then-Governor King's trade mission to the UK. All the while pretending that *of course* I knew all about the Trade Center. Thankfully, no one really knew what MITC was at the time, or ultimately what it would turn out to be.

The rest, as they say, is history. Thirty years of it. Through four governors, nine economic development commissioners, probably 60 coworkers spanning 5 generations. Thousands of clients, hundreds of millions of dollars of economic impact. Trade missions and shows in markets from Canada to Kazakhstan. The Silent Generation to Gen Z. "Friends" to "Love Is Blind." Shania Twain to Taylor Swift.

These have also been years of radical change – from putting 47 pages of paper through a constantly jamming fax machine because email wasn't a thing yet to AI-enhanced videoconferencing. Free trade with Canada cycling from the brand new NAFTA to USMCA and now back to tariffs. International trade being heavily impacted by financial crises in 1997 and 2008, not to mention 9/11 and COVID.

As I look back over these past three decades, I'm proud of how our organization, through multiple generations of staff, leaders, and supporters, have not wavered in our commitment. We were handed a mission with high expectations, and we have consistently exceeded them. MITC has evolved from export development to investment attraction to technology transfer and to where I think we are now: a trusted, integrated international economic development partner.

Most importantly, we've kept the focus on *all of Maine*, ensuring that businesses and people in small rural communities are as supported, welcomed, and promoted as those in Greater Portland.

I'm proud of the community that we've built over these past 30 years. We've created, together, a network of people who care deeply about Maine and its economic future. A network who remains passionately committed to the idea that small places, not just big ones, have a place at the international table.

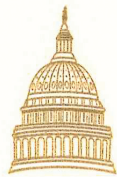
I'm honored to be the current carrier of the torch in this relay – thankful for all of those who have come before and for those who will continue the work into the future. And thankful to all of you who continue to support MITC, our team, and our work. Here's to the next 30 years!

Warm regards,

Wade Merritt

Maine International Trade Center President and State Director of International Trade





ANGUS S. KING, JR.  
MAINE

August 18, 2026

President Wade E. Merritt  
Maine International Trade Center  
2 Portland Fish Pier, Suite 204  
Portland, ME 04101

Dear Friends,

Congratulations on the 30th anniversary of the Maine International Trade Center (MITC). I am proud to join you in celebrating this milestone and recognizing the partners, leaders, and businesses whose vision and dedication have helped strengthen Maine's place in the global economy over the past three decades.

For 30 years, the Maine International Trade Center has helped Maine businesses compete and win in international markets by expanding export opportunities, fostering global connections, and attracting investment that supports economic growth across our state. Through this work, MITC has helped businesses of every size sell their products overseas, create jobs, and strengthen communities throughout Maine.

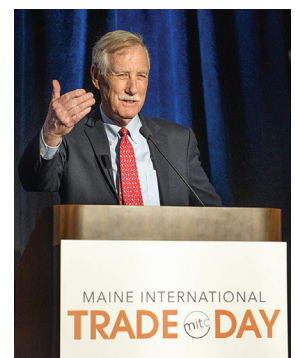
Again, congratulations on three decades of dedicated service, and thank you for your continued commitment to supporting Maine's businesses and economy. I look forward to seeing MITC continue building on its legacy of innovation and opportunity in the years ahead.

Best Regards,

ANGUS S. KING, JR.  
United States Senator

*Hard to believe it's been 30 years!  
Congratulations - and thanks*

NOT PAID FOR AT TAXPAYER EXPENSE





Janet T. Mills  
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MAINE  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
1 STATE HOUSE STATION  
AUGUSTA, MAINE  
04333-0001

July 30, 2026

Dear Friends,

Congratulations to the Maine International Trade Center on 30 years of supporting Maine businesses so they can turn their ingenuity, hard work, and world-class products into opportunities around the globe.

For three decades, MITC has strengthened Maine's economy by making sure that our businesses break into some of the world's most important markets. MITC has strengthened entrepreneurs, provided export training, led trade and goodwill missions, and connected Maine manufacturers, seafood harvesters, forest products businesses, and technology innovators with customers worldwide.

Since taking office, I have been deeply grateful for MITC's partnership in my Administration's work to make Maine the best place start or grow a business. That partnership has been especially important during periods of economic disruption—notably, during the pandemic, when MITC was a critical resource for businesses contending with closed markets, broken supply chains, and rapidly changing conditions. Today, as Maine companies confront the effects of the president's reckless and inconsistent trade policies, MITC remains a steady and trusted partner for businesses as they adapt, find new markets, and remain competitive in the global economy.

MITC's work is powered by its exceptional staff and its president, Wade Merritt—Maine's official state diplomat. Maine businesses use Wade's knowledge and vision to navigate a changing global marketplace and maintain key relationships abroad.

Congratulations to MITC on this milestone, and thank you for 30 years of service, partnership, and leadership in bringing Maine to the world—and the world to Maine.

Sincerely,

Janet T. Mills  
Governor



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# MITC President's Letter (1996 - 2000)

It's a great privilege to share some thoughts and reflections on the occasion of MITC's 30th anniversary. Time has just flown by. It's hard to believe MITC hasn't been a fixture of Maine's economic development scene, well, forever!

Those of us who were there at the beginning, however, may recall that MITC's origin story was a bit complicated. Prior to 1996, several nonprofits in Maine focused on export promotion and international business development, while public sector agencies at the state and federal level did the same. In 1996, however, Governor King tasked a select Committee to see if things could be done more effectively.

Following the recommendations of that Committee, the Maine International Trade Center was created by a unanimous Maine legislature, combining the Maine World Trade Association and the Maine Education and Training Export Partnership into MITC. The membership, staff, and boards of each organization merged in one fell swoop with the mission to help Maine businesses and to grow Maine's economy through international business. The US Department of Commerce and the US Small Business Administration (SBA) were active supporters and participants, as well.

As MITC's first President, I was charged with launching the effort, which meant helping to build the MITC brand, delivering trade assistance to Maine exporters, organizing our first trade missions, combining our offices from three different locations in Augusta into new high-visibility space in Portland, and opening a satellite office in Bangor, all while building a new organizational culture that maximized the talents of our combined staff and partners.

This was, at the time, uncharted territory. There were few organizations we could look to as examples (these were the early days of public-private partnerships), and the economic development landscape in Maine was quite well-established. Being "the new kid on the block," despite being an important initiative launched by the governor, created some challenges.

But in just a few years, MITC was itself part of the landscape, boasting strong partnerships with not only the US Department of Commerce and the SBA, but FAME, the Maine State Chamber of Commerce, and regional agencies like Eastern Maine Development Corporation. Our private sector membership grew dramatically, as well.

In addition to assisting hundreds of Maine businesses, we traveled to the UK, Brazil, Argentina, Hong Kong, and Taiwan with Governor King. Former Governor Ken Curtis led a delegation to Iceland. A legislative delegation visited our sister state (Jilin) in the People's Republic of China; visits to and from Aomori (our sister state in Japan) were annual events. In addition, many Maine businesses exhibited at and attended numerous trade shows around the world.

Somehow, we built the plane while flying it and made it through those first four years!

Today, MITC is a well-oiled machine and a success story. All credit goes to the many dedicated staff and board members, past and present, who spent countless hours helping Maine businesses succeed.

And, of course, special thanks to Governor (now Senator) King.

Congratulations to the entire MITC team, and here's to the next thirty years!

Perry B. Newman  
Executive Director  
Konbit Sante



# MITC President's Letter (2006 - 2017)

Happy 30th Anniversary MITC!

It was one of the great honors of my career to serve the Maine International Trade Center as Vice President and, later, as its first female President and State Director of Trade from 2006 to 2017. As I reflect on MITC's 30th anniversary, I am struck by how closely the organization's evolution paralleled so many phases of my own professional journey—and how deeply international trade has shaped Maine's economy, relationships, and outlook on the world.

I began my career as a young international business professional in the mid-1980s at a Maine seafood company exporting products to Europe and Asia. Those were exciting and ambitious years. We pursued some of the first joint ventures with Russia and developed business relationships in Japan, Korea, China, and other rapidly expanding international markets. The world seemed increasingly connected, and opportunities for Maine companies extended far beyond our borders.

At the same time, it became apparent that Maine needed a more cohesive, visible, and active trade organization to support the state's expanding international footprint. Business leaders and Governor Angus King recognized that need, and the creation of the Maine International Trade Center provided Maine businesses with a centralized resource for international market development, trade assistance, education, and global connections.

When I later had the opportunity to lead MITC during the administration of Governor John Baldacci, I was privileged to work alongside Maine companies during some of the state's most exciting years of international growth. During those years, MITC launched the Invest in Maine program to support international business attraction and encourage overseas companies to establish operations in the state. We developed StudyMaine to promote Maine's colleges, universities, and secondary schools to international students.

Later, we created the Maine North Atlantic Development Office to pursue new trade, investment, and cultural opportunities associated with the arrival and expansion of Eimskip's shipping service, strengthening Maine's connections with Europe, Iceland, and the Nordic countries. Those were remarkable years of new alliances, technological transformation, expanding markets, and rapid global change. They demonstrated that Maine, despite its relatively small population, could be innovative, outward-looking, and competitive on the international stage.

International trade has faced significant headwinds in recent years. Yet I remain a firm believer that trade, international outreach, and engagement across cultures and communities serve purposes far greater than commerce alone. They create relationships and alliances, support economic opportunities both in Maine and in developing communities, encourage mutual understanding, and ultimately, if properly nurtured, open important avenues for diplomacy and peace.

As MITC celebrates its 30th anniversary, I am enormously proud to see the organization thriving, adapting, and continuing its important work. Congratulations to the many staff members, board members, public officials, partners, and Maine businesses whose vision and commitment have made MITC such an enduring and valuable resource. May the next 30 years bring new partnerships, new opportunities, and an even stronger global future for Maine!

Janine Bisailon-Cary  
President  
Montserrat Group, LLC



# Evolution and Impact

Maine International Trade Center (MITC) was founded in 1996 by the Maine State Legislature as a public-private partnership to expand the state's economy by increasing international trade in goods and services.

## Chapter 107-B: MAINE INTERNATIONAL TRADE CENTER

In 1996, Maine's total international merchandise exports were valued at approximately \$1.45 billion, primarily driven by its historic paper, forestry, and seafood industries.

### Top Trading Partners:

Canada was by far Maine's largest international export market, followed closely by Japan, the UK, and Mexico.

### Key Goods Exported:

Paper and pulp products dominated the state's manufacturing output, alongside agricultural staples (potatoes, wild blueberries), crustaceans (lobster), and industrial/electrical machinery.

### Domestic Trade:

Due to Maine's geographic position, a large majority of its broader "exports" were actually domestic shipments to neighboring states, with paper and wood products leading domestic supply chains.

In 2016, Maine International Trade Center received the prestigious **President's "E" Award** from the US Department of Commerce (presented in cooperation with the US Commercial Service) in Washington, DC. This award, the highest national recognition a US entity can receive for contributing to the expansion of exports, honored MITC for outstanding work and dedication in helping local companies understand the export process and expand global sales.



The **Governor's International Breakfast** is a long-standing collaborative effort of the World Affairs Council of Maine and Maine International Trade Center. Inaugurated by then Governor Angus King, Jr. in 1997, the goal is to highlight the importance of international connections to Maine's economy and its people. We thank Governors King, Baldacci, LePage, and Mills for their participation in this nonpartisan tradition.

## Locations

### Bangor

1997 – 2009

### Lewiston

1999 – 2006

### Portland

1997 – 2016

511 Congress Street  
2016 – present  
2 Portland Fish Pier

## Focused Initiatives

### StudyMaine

2010 – 2024

### Invest in Maine

2013 – present

### Maine North Atlantic Development Office (MENADO)

2016 – present

### Defense Industry Maine (DIME)

2018 – present

# \$350M

in export sales for  
Maine businesses  
facilitated over  
30 years

MITC's **Future Global Leaders (FGL) internship program** is open to college students and recent college graduates. We offer paid, part-time international market research internships, which help Maine businesses while providing practical experience. Over the last 30 years, MITC has been very fortunate to welcome over 200 amazing interns. Around 30% of our former FGLs are still in Maine, and about 10% are working internationally around the globe (e.g., Belgium, China, Germany, Mexico, Turkey, and the United Kingdom).

# Annual Trade & Investment Award Winners

| Year | Exporter of the Year           | Innovator of the Year                                        | Service Provider of the Year                    |
|------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| 2026 | Ocean's Balance                | 3rd Planet Innovation                                        | Maine Maritime Academy                          |
| 2025 | Xuron Corp.                    | Global Secure Shipping                                       | Kelson Marine Co.                               |
| 2024 | Tempshield                     | Gulf of Maine, Inc.                                          | Bangor International Airport                    |
| 2023 | North American Kelp            | Fox Forestry                                                 | Dirigo Strategies                               |
| 2022 | DeepWater Buoyancy             | Puritan Medical Products                                     | School of Policy & International Affairs (SPIA) |
| 2021 | Montalvo Corporation           | Ocean Renewable Power Company (ORPC)                         | NaviTrade Structured Finance                    |
| 2019 | Auburn Manufacturing           | Luke's Lobster Seafood Company                               | Thornton Academy                                |
| 2018 | Maine Coast                    | Fiber Materials, Inc. (FMI)                                  | Planson International                           |
| 2017 | Yale Cordage                   | Advanced Structures & Composites Center, University of Maine | Verrill Dana, LLP                               |
| 2016 | Kepware Technologies           | Mt. Blue Campus                                              | Allen Insurance & Financial                     |
| 2015 | Ready Seafood                  | Hodgdon Yachts                                               | OCEANAIR                                        |
| 2014 | Hydro International            | Cianbro                                                      | Husson University                               |
| 2013 | EnviroLogix, Inc.              | Bigelow Laboratory for Ocean Sciences                        | TD Bank                                         |
| 2012 | Hancock Lumber                 | Falcon Performance Footwear                                  | Bernstein Shur                                  |
| 2011 | Cozy Harbor                    | Artel                                                        | CIEE                                            |
| 2010 | Fluid Imaging                  | Lighthouse Imaging Corporation                               | Sprague Energy                                  |
| 2009 | Elmet Technologies             | Lee Academy                                                  | A.N. Deringer Logistics                         |
| 2008 | Baker Company                  | Safe Handling                                                | Preti Flaherty                                  |
| 2007 | Oak Island Seafood             | Trillium, Inc.                                               | Diversified Communications                      |
| 2006 | Electro Static Technologies    | Eastern Maine Development Corporation (EMDC)                 | Eaton Peabody                                   |
| 2005 | IDEXX                          | Eastman Industries                                           | Pierce Atwood                                   |
| 2004 | Hussey Seating                 | Correct Building Products                                    | Telford Aviation                                |
| 2003 | William Atwood Lobster Co.     | The Jackson Laboratory                                       | Cloutier Direct                                 |
| 2002 | Hardwood Products              | Jasper Wyman & Sons                                          | Bangor Savings Bank                             |
| 2001 | Robbins Lumber                 | Maine MEP (Manufacturing Extension Partnership)              | Berry Dunn MacNeil and Parker                   |
| 2000 | Rockwood Swendeman             | Loon Country                                                 | Lee International                               |
| 1999 | Fairchild Semiconductor        | Brunswick Technologies                                       | Downeast International                          |
| 1998 | William Atwood Lobster Co      | Eastport Port Authority                                      | Swardlick Marketing                             |
| 1997 | Seven Islands Land Corporation | Maine Maritime Academy                                       | Chase Leavitt                                   |

*Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Trade Day 2020 was cancelled, and award winners selected in December 2019 were honored virtually at Trade Day 2021.*

# Annual Trade & Investment Award Winners

| Year | Investor of the Year*                                   | President's Award                            | Future Global Leader Award                   |
|------|---------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| 2026 | The Roux Institute at Northeastern University           | Sheila Adams                                 | Madison Johnson                              |
| 2025 | Our Katahdin                                            | Adrian Kendall and Johnna Major              | Kasei Oma                                    |
| 2024 | Medix Biochemica/ViroStat                               | Sal Savatteri, Jr.                           | Sophia Di Risi                               |
| 2023 | Libellula                                               | Maine Lobster Marketing Collaborative        | Keegan Stanton-Meas                          |
| 2022 | Adapt Agency                                            | Josh Rosen                                   | Abigail Gray                                 |
| 2021 | Modula                                                  | Kelly L'Heureux                              | Jaime Coyle, Kathryn McMorrow, and Sam Morin |
| 2019 | ND Paper/Nine Dragons Paper Holding Ltd.                | Charlie Emmons and Mike Stone                | Apryl King                                   |
| 2018 | St. Croix Tissue (International Grand Investment Corp.) | Muriel Mosher                                | Jeff Cuartas                                 |
| 2017 | C&L Aviation Group                                      | John Wolanski and Joe Mooney                 | Luke Middleton                               |
| 2016 | Eimskip                                                 | Adrian Kendall                               | Joe Long                                     |
| 2015 | Dalegip America, Inc.                                   | Christopher H. Paradis                       | Maxine Secskas                               |
| 2014 | J.D. Irving, Ltd.                                       | US Small Business Administration             | Erica Benson                                 |
| 2013 | Emera                                                   | Annette Bossler                              | Abby McCloskey                               |
| 2012 | Mölnlycke Health Care                                   | German Consulate General in Boston           | Catherine Collins                            |
| 2011 | Sappi                                                   | John Gulliver                                | Agnieszka Carpenter                          |
| 2010 | TransCanada                                             | Ruth Greene                                  | Leah Swan                                    |
| 2009 | Cooke Aquaculture                                       | Cathy Lee                                    | Andrew Totman                                |
| 2008 | Fontaine                                                | Canadian Consulate General in Boston         |                                              |
| 2007 | Tate & Lyle                                             | Jeffrey Porter                               |                                              |
| 2006 | Poland Spring/Nestle                                    | Forum Francophone des Affaires               |                                              |
| 2005 | T-Mobile                                                | Laurenz Schmidt                              |                                              |
| 2004 | BRASCAN Corp                                            | Peter Anania                                 |                                              |
| 2003 | Domtar                                                  | David R. Fuller                              |                                              |
| 2002 | Aroostook Starch                                        | Bob Ziegelaar                                |                                              |
| 2001 | McCain Foods                                            | Mark Woodsum                                 |                                              |
| 2000 |                                                         | Ward Graffam                                 |                                              |
| 1999 |                                                         | Loring Development Authority                 |                                              |
| 1998 |                                                         | Ambassador Ken Curtis                        |                                              |
| 1997 |                                                         | Ineke Schair, World Affairs Council of Maine |                                              |

\* Formerly Foreign Direct Investor of the Year, this award was renamed Investor of the Year in 2025

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Trade Day 2020 was cancelled, and award winners selected in December 2019 were honored virtually at Trade Day 2021.

**The John Bernotavicz Award**  
— a lifetime achievement award for individuals who have been active participants and supporters of Maine International Trade Center and have contributed significantly to Maine's international business community — has been awarded only twice:

2001 - Jeanne Hulit

2005 - Angus King

## Quotes from Maine Businesses

"Since joining MITC in 2013, Allen Insurance & Financial has benefited tremendously from our membership. It has helped us discover new ways to support fellow Maine companies while fostering connections across Maine and around the world. Those relationships have led to valuable opportunities, meaningful partnerships, and a positive impact on our growth."

*Dan Bookham, Senior Vice President, [Allen Insurance & Financial](#) (2016 Service Provider of the Year)*

"Baker Company has been working with MITC for quite some time - nearly the entire 30 years of its existence - I would guess since 1998 or so. MITC has been an invaluable resource. We have taken advantage of training and education programs for our staff that deal with export transactions and compliance. We have also been able to identify new export sales opportunities with MITC's assistance, specifically through trade shows (MEDICA as an example) and through access to SBA grants."

*David Eagleson, CEO, [Baker Company](#) (2008 Exporter of the Year)*

"Bixby Chocolate has been working with MITC since 2013 and joined the Maine delegation for the 2015 trade mission to China and Japan. MITC is an incredible resource and important partner for Maine companies to navigate importing and exporting. They are a vital resource and sounding board, as well as grant provider for important dollars to build one's business."

*Kate McAleer, Owner/Candy Queen, [Bixby Chocolate](#)*

"Seafood is the world's top traded food commodity, and having strong international trade expertise is essential for business success. We're grateful for Maine International Trade Center's long-standing support. Cooke USA has benefited greatly over the years from the team's guidance on trade and efforts to help tell the story of how Atlantic salmon aquaculture contributes to Maine's working waterfront and seafood economy. Congratulations to MITC on 30 years of service to Maine's business community."

*Glenn Cooke, CEO, [Cooke Inc.](#) (2009 Foreign Direct Investor of the Year)*

"As a business leader, I tend to think a lot about relationships and networks. Our 10-plus-year relationship with MITC has given us access to information and awareness of what is happening in markets around the world, helping us assess trends and see potential trouble spots. We have received several STEP awards that allowed us to travel and exhibit at international trade shows and build our customer bases in areas such as the UK, Canada, Europe, and Asia. Over 30% of our sales are now international. Deepwater Buoyancy's connection to MITC is one we value and helps us to live locally in Maine while maintaining our position as a world-leading producer of subsea buoyancy."

*David Capotosto, CEO, [DeepWater Buoyancy](#) (2022 Exporter of the Year)*



"Eimskip has worked with MITC for many years, and the organization has been a valuable partner in helping us strengthen connections across Maine's international business community. Through networking events, introductions, and export-focused programs, MITC has helped create meaningful opportunities to connect with prospective customers and partners while supporting the growth of global trade in Maine."

*Brian Duffy, Head of Business Development, [Eimskip](#) (2016 Foreign Direct Investor of the Year)*

"Thank you, MITC, for being a constant source of trusted, reliable information throughout the years. It's a big world out there, and we have always appreciated your responsiveness, expertise, and unwavering support. Congratulations on this remarkable milestone, and here's to another 30 years of success and collaboration!"

*Angela Gillespie, Chief Operating Officer, [Howell Laboratories, Inc.](#)*

## Quotes from Maine Businesses (cont.)

"Hussey Seating Company has been doing business internationally since the 1960s with our strongest export markets today in Asia, Europe, and the Middle East. Our engagement with MITC has spanned more than two decades. We've learned that the choice of partners is so critical when doing business internationally. If we find ourselves in unknown territory or encounter unexpected obstacles with an international contract, we can call on MITC's local and global connections and depth of experience. We've done it more than once over the years."  
*Brian Deveaux, President and CEO, [Hussey Seating Company](#) (2004 Exporter of the Year)*

"Luke's Lobster has been a member of MITC for over a decade, as long as we have been a lobster dealer. MITC has been an incredible resource making introductions and connections to international and domestic markets and supported sales initiatives like our exhibit at Seafood Expo North America and other shows that were critical to building the company we are today and helping us pursue the vision of becoming the world's most trusted seafood brand."  
*Ben Conniff, Co-Founder & Impact Executive, [Luke's Lobster](#) (2019 Innovator of the Year)*

"Through trade missions, and strategic introductions, export training, and STEP funding, MITC has helped ORPC grow its international relationships and pursue opportunities in key markets, particularly Canada, since 2017. We are proud to join in celebrating MITC's 30 years of advancing Maine's global business community."  
*Stuart Davies, CEO, [ORPC](#) (2021 Innovator of the Year)*

"Preti Flaherty is proud to have worked alongside MITC since 1996—30 years! MITC has helped our law firm—and more importantly, our clients—thrive by providing technical expertise and helping us show international businesses that we are as comfortable working across borders and time zones as we are across Maine."  
*Greg Hansel, Partner, [Preti Flaherty](#) (2008 Service Provider of the Year)*

"Puritan Medical Products Company has been a member of MITC since 1998. Over the years, MITC has assisted our international efforts by providing market intelligence specific to the countries where we seek distribution opportunities. As our export business grows, so does the friendship between our organizations. Thank you!"  
*Virginia Temple, Marketing Director, [Puritan Medical Products Company](#) (2022 Innovator of the Year)*

"Southworth International Group, Inc. (SIGI) first engaged with MITC around 2010. As we looked to grow our business internationally, we were attracted to the ways that MITC supports Maine businesses with market access and learning. Our team participated in MITC-led trips to Brazil and Mexico in those early days. We have also participated in an MITC-led visit to Scandinavia. MITC supports SIGI in a range of areas, including market access, training, peer-to-peer sharing, and technical assistance with questions we have around trade policy, customs, and compliance matters. MITC has been a tremendous resource for SIGI as we have scaled our business from a national to an international market leader."  
*James Cabot, President and Chief Executive Officer, [Southworth International Group, Inc.](#)*

"Tempshield has been involved with MITC for over 20 years. During this time MITC has been a valued resource for assistance with international trade shows and multiple referrals for business assistance on different topics, as well as introductions to other members for support when needed."  
*Paul Larochelle, Chief Operating Officer, [Tempshield](#) (2024 Exporter of the Year)*



## Quotes from Our Partners

"For 30 years, Maine International Trade Center (MITC) has been an invaluable partner to Maine businesses and to organizations like CEI that are committed to helping entrepreneurs grow, adapt, and reach new markets. Through shared referrals, trusted expertise, collaborative advising, and leadership in strengthening global relationships such as Maine's sister-state connection with Aomori, Japan, MITC has helped expand opportunities for businesses across our state. CEI is proud to celebrate this milestone and grateful for MITC's continued partnership in connecting Maine to the world."

*Betsy Biemann, CEO, [Coastal Enterprises Inc. \(CEI\)](#)*

"MITC has been an indispensable partner to the Consulate General of Canada in New England. MITC's steadfast partnership, expertise, and commitment to the benefits of trade have strengthened the Canada-Maine relationship and helped to grow commercial opportunities in both Canada and Maine. From traditional sectors that have powered our economy for generations to the innovative sectors of the future, we look forward to working with MITC to grow prosperity on both sides of the border for decades to come."

*[The Team at the Consulate General of Canada in New England](#) (2008 President's Award)*



"Eastern Maine Development Corporation's longstanding partnership with MITC complements our business, economic and workforce development efforts by connecting eastern Maine businesses with international trade expertise and opportunities. Through MITC's agile, innovative, and opportune approach, EMDC's business partners gain access to export assistance, international market intelligence, and technical expertise to support sustainability and competitiveness."

*Lee Umphrey, President & CEO, [Eastern Maine Development Corporation \(EMDC\)](#) (2006 Innovator of the Year)*

"FAME has greatly valued its longstanding partnership with MITC in supporting Maine businesses and their growth. MITC serves as a trusted resource and strong advocate for companies pursuing opportunities beyond Maine and the US, helping them expand their reach and strengthen their impact. Through this work, MITC continues to play an important role in advancing economic growth and opportunity across Maine."

*Carlos Mello, Chief Executive Officer, [Finance Authority of Maine \(FAME\)](#)*

"Friends of Aomori has long partnered with MITC to manage the Maine-Aomori sister-state relationship, which MITC has supported since it began in 1996. This collaboration has facilitated numerous technology transfers in the scallop and kelp industries, as well as cultural and educational exchanges like the Hashi student print program. Most recently, we worked closely with MITC leadership on the October 2025 delegation visit to Japan to explore new opportunities in the blue economy and circular innovation. MITC serves as a vital bridge connecting Maine businesses to global markets through technical assistance, market research, and trade missions. By fostering international partnerships—such as the enduring ties with Aomori Prefecture—MITC drives innovation in key sectors like aquaculture and forest products, education and the arts, helping Maine companies scale their operations and compete on a worldwide stage."

*Lynda McCann-Olson, President, [Friends of Aomori](#)*



## Quotes from Our Partners (cont.)

"On behalf of the Maine Center for Entrepreneurs, we are thrilled to congratulate Maine International Trade Center on celebrating an impactful 30 years of connecting Maine businesses to global opportunities. By a fun stroke of serendipity, MCE is also marking our own 30th anniversary milestone, which makes this moment feel even more meaningful as we look back on three decades of shared economic vision for our state. For 30 years, MITC has served as a pillar of Maine's economic development strategy, providing local businesses with the specialized trade research, grant funding, and the one-on-one counseling needed to navigate complex global markets. MITC's dedicated team has opened doors for local companies, proving that Maine-made innovation belongs on the world stage. Our collaborative relationship with MITC has strengthened the local business ecosystem. Together, we have bridged the gap between early-stage entrepreneurial development and global market acceleration, ensuring that Maine's boldest startups can scale beyond borders. We are proud to stand alongside MITC as peer organizations celebrating 30 years of impact, and we wish you many more decades of fostering a vibrant, globally competitive Maine."

*Tom Rainey, Executive Director, [Maine Center for Entrepreneurs](#)*

"As we mark the 30th anniversary of Maine International Trade Center, I want to thank MITC for three decades of partnership that has helped open the world to Maine businesses. The Department of Economic and Community Development has worked alongside MITC on export readiness programs, trade missions, and industry-specific market development. Combining resources, expertise and networks, Wade and his team help Maine companies scale, compete, and succeed abroad. Their persistent focus on expanding market access, building export capacity, and connecting firms with buyers and buyers with Maine suppliers plays a vital role in growing our economy. The work they do supports job creation across our coastal towns and inland communities, diversifies our industries, and brings new investment and innovation to the state. This partnership has turned local strengths into global opportunities, and I'm excited for what the next 30 years will bring to grow Maine's presence on the world stage."

*Michael Duguay, Commissioner, [Maine Department of Economic Community Development \(DECD\)](#)*

"The partnership between Maine International Trade Center (MITC) and Maine MEP strengthens the global competitiveness of Maine manufacturers by helping small and medium-sized businesses pursue international growth. Through trade counseling, market research, import/export assistance, trade missions, educational workshops, trade shows, and joint marketing efforts, the organizations connect manufacturers with state, federal, and international resources while expanding global market opportunities.

The services provided through the partnership between MITC and Maine MEP ensure that Maine manufacturers, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises, have access to the expertise, resources, and international connections required to compete in the global economy. Many businesses face challenges related to exporting, market identification, trade compliance, logistics, and international business development that cannot be effectively addressed without specialized assistance. These services help companies overcome those barriers by providing technical support, educational opportunities, trade counseling, and access to

international markets that support business growth and increased sales.

The partnership strengthens Maine's manufacturing sector by expanding global market opportunities, improving

competitiveness, and supporting economic development

statewide. Without these collaborative services, many Maine manufacturers would have limited ability to pursue international opportunities, diversify their customer base, and generate sustainable revenue growth."

*Jim Fay, President, [Maine MEP \(Manufacturing Extension Partnership\)](#) (2001 Innovator of the Year)*



## Quotes from Our Partners (cont.)

"MITC and MDF have collaborated for a long time to move Maine's economy forward as members of a rare and important set of peers. Like MDF, MITC is a small but mighty team fulfilling an ambitious statewide mission. Like MDF, MITC is a public-private partnership between government and the private sector. And, over the past decade, we have worked together more than ever through FOR/Maine and SEAMaine to advance investment in an innovation-driven future for Maine's evolving natural resource industries in forestry and fisheries where tapping into international trends, foreign direct investment, and transcontinental collaborations are especially crucial to building Maine's economic potential. MITC and its North Atlantic Development Office have been singularly instrumental in bringing partners and investors to the table. Congratulations to Wade and the current and past generations of the MITC team for decades of ever-increasing impact!"

*Yellow Light Breen, President & CEO, [Maine Development Foundation](#)*



"The Maine Port Authority has been fortunate to have a longstanding partnership with Maine International Trade Center. Over the years, MITC has provided invaluable insight to international markets, which has allowed MPA to plan and promote both port and intermodal facilities across the State. The robust network MITC has created throughout Maine's 16 counties continues to unite industry, service, and education to grow and support Maine's economy."

*Chelsea Pettengill, Executive Director, [Maine Port Authority](#)*

"The Maine State Chamber has been proud to partner with MITC for many years, working together to connect Maine businesses with international expertise, timely trade information, and new opportunities for growth. MITC helps bring the global marketplace within reach for Maine companies of every size, providing the guidance, relationships, and resources they need to find new customers and compete successfully. That work strengthens individual businesses, supports Maine jobs and investment, and helps build a more diverse, resilient, and competitive Maine economy."

*Patrick C. Woodcock, President & CEO, [Maine State Chamber of Commerce](#)*

"Maine International Trade Center has been an incredible ally in helping us showcase Northern Maine. Whether they are hosting Sector Spotlight tours of the region, delivering advocacy to position us for international investment and partnership, or supporting our entrepreneurs one-on-one as they break into new markets, their partnership has been invaluable to growing Northern Maine and beyond."

*Robert Clark, Executive Director, [Northern Maine Development Commission \(NMDC\)](#)*

"Congratulations to Maine International Trade Center on 30 years of advancing international business for the State of Maine. It has been a pleasure to work alongside MITC through Québec's Office in New England on countless initiatives that have strengthened economic ties. Maine and Québec share a longstanding partnership built on trust, collaboration, and strong people-to-people connections. More than trading partners, we are friends. We celebrate this important milestone and look forward to creating new opportunities and strengthening our economies together in the years ahead."

*Marie-Claude Francoeur, Assistant Deputy Minister, Québec Ministry of International Relations and Francophonie, [Québec Government Office in Boston](#)*

## Quotes from Our Partners (cont.)

"Working with MITC has shown us what is possible when statewide organizations invest in place-based partnerships. Together, we have connected Washington County businesses with the tools, expertise, and opportunities they need to grow beyond their traditional markets. MITC has helped create the conditions for long-term economic resilience across Maine by ensuring that rural businesses have access to the same growth opportunities as businesses anywhere else. We are grateful to be part of that shared mission and proud of what we have accomplished together."

*Denise Cilley, Associate Director, [Sunrise County Economic Council](#)*

"MITC plays an important role in growing Maine's economy by connecting industry, government, academia, and entrepreneurs to drive innovation and opportunity. We've had a long-standing partnership with MITC, and they've been a strong supporter of our innovation initiatives through strategic introductions, letters of support, and promotion of our programs. Together, we've co-hosted national security and blue economy innovation events, welcomed international delegations like the Korean Shipbuilding Manufacturers Association to the Roux Institute, and collaborated on initiatives that help address Maine's most pressing challenges. MITC has been a valued ecosystem partner, consistently bringing people and organizations together to strengthen Maine's innovation, technology, and entrepreneurial economy."

*Chris Torina, Director of Entrepreneurship and Director of the National Security Innovation Hub, [The Roux Institute at Northeastern University](#) (2026 Investor of the Year)*

"The University of Maine has long valued its partnership with Maine International Trade Center. Together, we have connected businesses from Maine and around the globe to Maine research, expertise, and talent; created meaningful opportunities for our students; and introduced learners and partners from around the world to all that Maine has to offer. MITC plays an essential role in our state's economy by helping Maine organizations reach global markets, attract investment and talent, and turn innovation into sustainable growth. Additionally, MITC has played an essential role in providing Maine students an opportunity to bring their talents to the world through the Future Global Leaders internship program. Congratulations to MITC on 30 years of strengthening Maine's global connections and expanding opportunities for people and communities across our state."

*Joan Ferrini-Mundy, President, [University of Maine](#) (2022 Service Provider of the Year - School of Policy & International Affairs (SPIA); 2017 Innovator of the Year - Advanced Structures & Composites Center (ACSS))*

"The University of Southern Maine (USM) has been proud to partner with the Maine International Trade Center (MITC) for many years, working together to strengthen Maine's global connections and prepare the next generation of internationally minded leaders. Through MITC's programs, events, and network, our students, faculty, and staff have had opportunities to engage with businesses, policymakers, and global partners. MITC's Maine North Atlantic Development Office (MENADO) has been a wonderful complementary resource to USM's activities and interests in the High North over the last decade. MITC plays an essential role in growing Maine's economy by helping businesses build international relationships, access new markets, and compete globally. Just as importantly, MITC brings together higher education, industry, and government to ensure Maine has the talent, partnerships, and global perspective needed for long-term economic success. At USM, we've seen firsthand how these connections benefit our students and strengthen our communities, making MITC an invaluable partner in advancing both education and economic opportunity across the state."

*Jacqueline Edmondson, President, [University of Southern Maine](#)*

## Quotes from Our Partners (cont.)

"We were there at the beginning. Six World Affairs Council directors sat on Governor King's 1995 Advisory Council on International Trade, one of them as a co-chair, and we made the case for what became MITC. We made it because we understood what Maine needed: a permanent ramp to international markets, and one place where the state's scattered trade functions could finally be consolidated.

We knew then, as we know now, that Maine's road map to prosperity is global. So when MITC opened, we threw the 'Anchors Aweigh!' party, inviting Governor King and MITC's first President Perry Newman to celebrate the new center and its mission. That morning became the Governor's International Breakfast, which we have presented with MITC every year since, through four administrations.

Thirty years on, the partnership keeps finding new work, from fisheries and forestry to shipbuilding, blue tech, and defense manufacturing. Through the US State Department's International Visitor Leadership Program, we bring the world to Maine's door; MITC opens that door for Maine business. Happy 30th. We are proud to have helped start it, and prouder still of what you have made of it."

*Allison Hodgkins, Executive Director, [World Affairs Council of Maine](#)*



# Letter from First MITC Board Chair & Vice Chair

To the MITC Community,

As we mark this anniversary, we've found ourselves looking back on 1996 and the unlikely path that brought this organization into being.

At the time, Maine's international trade efforts were scattered across a handful of well-meaning organizations, namely the state's Trade Office within DECD, the Maine World Trade Association, and the Maine Educational Training Partnership; each competing for the same limited state dollars, none of them funded well enough to fully deliver on its mission. Then-candidate, and soon Governor, Angus King asked a simple but pointed question: what can we do better and differently? His answer, which we helped shape, was to bring these efforts together into a single organization, a public-private partnership, tied to the Governor's office and supported by the business community. One that could support trade missions and speak with one voice for Maine businesses abroad.

That idea took real shape at a day-long retreat at the Blaine House, where roughly 50 business leaders and stakeholders gathered to brainstorm what a new approach to trade development should be. With leaders like the late John Bernotavicz at the helm, Angus' initial position paper, and eventually the legislation that created MITC, was written. Without John, it's unclear what these last 30 years would have looked like.

Considered a visionary with a strong sense of the big picture, Angus brought the right people to the table and then had the wisdom to step back and let them do the work. Early private-sector leaders also pledged their own financial support alongside the state's, recognizing that matching public dollars with private commitment was the only way to build something that could last.

Those first years were, in every sense, a startup. We were selling the idea of MITC while simultaneously creating it; announcing a trade mission to the UK and Scotland almost immediately, then following with missions to Taiwan and Hong Kong, Japan, and South America. We had to prove our worth as we went, and over time brought in additional talented staff to run the organization well, including the operational leadership that later focused squarely on the client experience Maine businesses have come to rely on.

One of the most pivotal moments in MITC's evolution was the decision to locate the new organization in Portland. It gave the organization far greater visibility and better access to the resources and businesses it existed to serve, strengthening Portland's role as the hub of Maine's international community.

Looking back, we believe MITC's greatest impact is one that isn't always fully appreciated: it gave Maine a seat at the table just as the world was globalizing. Maine is, at its core, a small-

business state, and among those were businesses that doubted they could ever compete globally. MITC proved otherwise by showing, year after year, that Maine's products and companies were genuinely globally competitive. Modeled in part on what California had built for its own businesses, MITC didn't need to hold every resource itself; it simply needed to know where those resources were and connect people to them. Without it, we believe Maine would have been left behind as industries shifted and the world grew smaller.

MITC also became a forum for ideas; a place where the international business community could come together informally, not just formally. That, as much as any single mission or program, is what allowed Maine's international community to grow.

Our advice, as MITC looks ahead, is the same today as it was at the start: stay the course. Keep Maine and the international community at the center of the work. Keep intensifying the outreach and keep asking how MITC can be helpful to individual companies. Whether that be through information, through connection, through simply making it easier for more people to get involved. It doesn't all need to be formal to matter.

It has been the privilege of our careers to help start something that has meant so much to Maine's businesses and to the state's place in the world. Thank you to everyone who carries this mission forward.

With gratitude and pride,

Ward Graffam, Founding Chair, MITC Board of Directors  
Jeanne Hult, Founding Vice Chair, MITC Board of Directors



# Letter from Current MITC Board Chair

To the Members and Supporters of the Maine International Trade Center:

Thirty years ago, MITC was founded on a simple but powerful belief: Maine's future prosperity depended on connecting our businesses, innovators, and natural strengths to global markets. That mission remains unchanged. What has changed is the scale of the opportunity before us.

Over the past three decades, MITC has helped transform international trade from an opportunity available to only a few large companies into a pathway for businesses of every size. Through trade missions, educational programs, strategic partnerships, and direct business assistance, MITC has helped build a culture of global engagement that benefits communities across Maine.

MITC has also encouraged Maine businesses to think beyond geographic boundaries. For thirty years, the organization has connected local companies with customers, partners, and investors around the world, helping position Maine as an active participant in the global economy.

Perhaps most importantly, MITC has demonstrated the power of public-private collaboration. Business leaders, educators, entrepreneurs, and government partners have worked together toward a shared vision for economic growth. That collaborative model will be even more important in the decades ahead.

As we celebrate this milestone, the larger question is: What will the next thirty years look like? I believe the future will be shaped by the intersection of global trade, artificial intelligence, and natural resources—and few places are better positioned than Maine.

While AI is often viewed as a purely digital technology, it relies on physical assets: energy, water, land, infrastructure, and resilient supply chains. These are areas where Maine holds genuine advantages. Our abundant clean water, vast timberlands, and world-renowned seafood and aquaculture industries are foundational assets that can become even more valuable in an AI-driven economy. Technology is creating new opportunities in advanced manufacturing, precision forestry, sustainable food production, environmental stewardship, and renewable energy.

The AI economy will not reward only places with the most software engineers. It will reward places with real resources, real assets, and real-world challenges to solve. Maine's working waterfronts, productive forests, research institutions, innovative businesses, and exceptional quality of life provide a strong foundation for future growth.

MITC's role remains clear: connect Maine businesses to global markets, connect Maine to global innovation, and connect our natural advantages to the industries of the future.

Thirty years ago, MITC helped Maine businesses look beyond our borders. Today, as artificial intelligence reshapes the global economy, our mission is more relevant than ever. The world will continue to need



food, water, timber, energy, and innovation. Maine has all of these.

The opportunity before us is to connect those strengths to the markets and technologies that will shape the future.

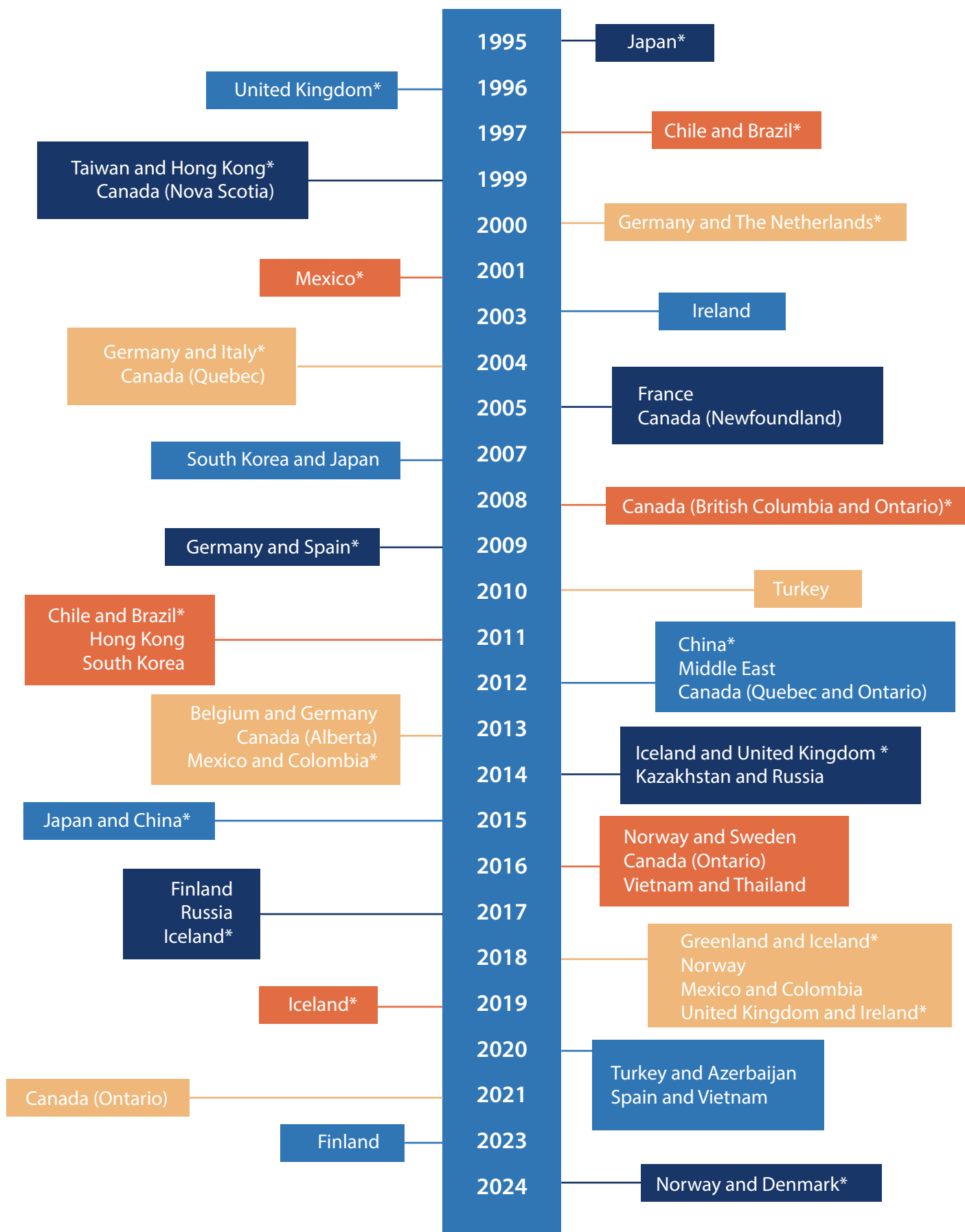
I believe we can.

And I believe MITC's next thirty years will be even more impactful than its first.

Jason Lundy, Chair, MITC Board of Directors

# MITC Trade Missions Timeline

\*Gubernatorial delegation





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