Updated: August 1, 2022 PHOTO ESSAY

For startups, TechPlace is creating ‘collisions of innovation’

PHOTO / FRED FIELD

Jaimie Logan, left, is the director of **TechPlace** at **Brunswick Landing**. With her is **Kristine Logan**, who founded TechPlace and was its first director. Kristine Logan is now the executive director of the **Midcoast Regional Redevelopment Authority**, which oversees Brunswick Landing.

By Fred J. Field

Jaimie Logan says collisions are frequent at TechPlace located near the runways of the old Brunswick Naval Air Station. But there’s no need for FAA intervention.

“We have collisions of innovation all the time,” she says with a smile.

TechPlace is Brunswick Landing’s technology accelerator housed in an old aircraft hangar that’s home to 38 small fledgling companies.

When I got the assignment to photograph TechPlace I thought the idea of a small business incubator sounded cool.

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It is.

It’s like a very special startup city. What makes it special is the cooperative spirit, high energy and sense of “home” that abounds.

While it may take a village to raise a child, TechPlace Founder Kristine Logan believes it takes startup companies helping one another to raise a business and she says it happens with regularity here.

“It’s extremely helpful emotionally to have people from other companies around who can say to someone from a different startup who is struggling, ‘Hey, we went through that and you will too, just hang in there,’” says Kristine Logan, who is executive director of the Midcoast Regional Redevelopment Authority, which manages Brunswick Landing.

Jaimie Logan, no relation to Kristine Logan, is TechPlace’s director.

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She points out that while the Navy blessed the facility with an enviable infrastructure, again it’s the people that make the difference.

“This state has an island mentality where there’s a spirit of cooperation and assistance that’s so natural for Mainers. It’s that ‘can-do, will-do’ attitude,” she says.

TechPlace industries must fit one of the following categories: advanced materials, composites technology, aerospace, aviation, biotech/biomed or renewable energy.

With 98% occupancy, Jaimie Logan says she feels bad turning away companies. So many of the would-be tenants are in the biotech/biomed fields that Kristine Logan says there’s talk of creating a TechPlace life sciences center elsewhere at Brunswick Landing. That would relieve some of the occupancy pressure.

“It’s a second home,” Salmonics CEO Cem Giray says of TechPlace. “When I come in here seeing Jaimie, she’s just such a welcoming person, you feel comfortable, at ease really.”

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If the rest of the world is separated by 6 degrees, in Maine it may be closer to 2 degrees, Jaimie Logan says.

“People are moving around talking to each other here and they just light up,” she says. “Conversations just pop up.”

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Veronica Achorn is the head of operations at **Salmonics** at **TechPlace**. Salmonics uses salmon plasma proteins that are naturally free of mammalian viruses and prions. This makes Salmonics products ideal for research applications in regenerative medicine and pain studies.

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Casey Warner is part of **Clamar Floats**, which makes amphibious floats for seaplanes. Many of the floats are boxed up and shipped to Alaska.

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The Italian father-daughter team of **Camillo Franchi Scarselli** and **Julia Franchi Scarselli** are co-founders of the newest **TechPlace** company, **Libellula**. Based in Italy, they wanted a presence on American soil and landed here. Libellula produces its olive oil in Italy, but uses TechPlace as a U.S. base of operations. Libellula offers customers the option to adopt olive trees to help family farms in Italy.

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Daniel Greisen is president of **Greisen Aerospace**, which has the longest tenure of any company at **TechPlace**. Behind him are large rocket motor test stands.

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Sascha Deri is considered a **TechPlace** success story, according to **Kristine Logan**. Deri’s **bluShift Aerospace** company had humble beginnings in this garage. His company grew and he moved out of TechPlace and although he’s a TechPlace graduate, “He is still a TechPlace affiliate allowing him to use the TechPlace shared shops and equipment,” said Logan.

About the photographer

PHOTO / FRED FIELD

Cumberland-based photojournalist **Fred J. Field** has completed more than 15,000 newspaper and magazine assignments. He has been a staff photographer at newspapers in Maine and Massachusetts, becoming photo director at two of them. He has earned state, regional and national awards for his photojournalism.

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