

41st Annual MEEOA Conference

Higher Education in 2024: Perseverance and Partnerships

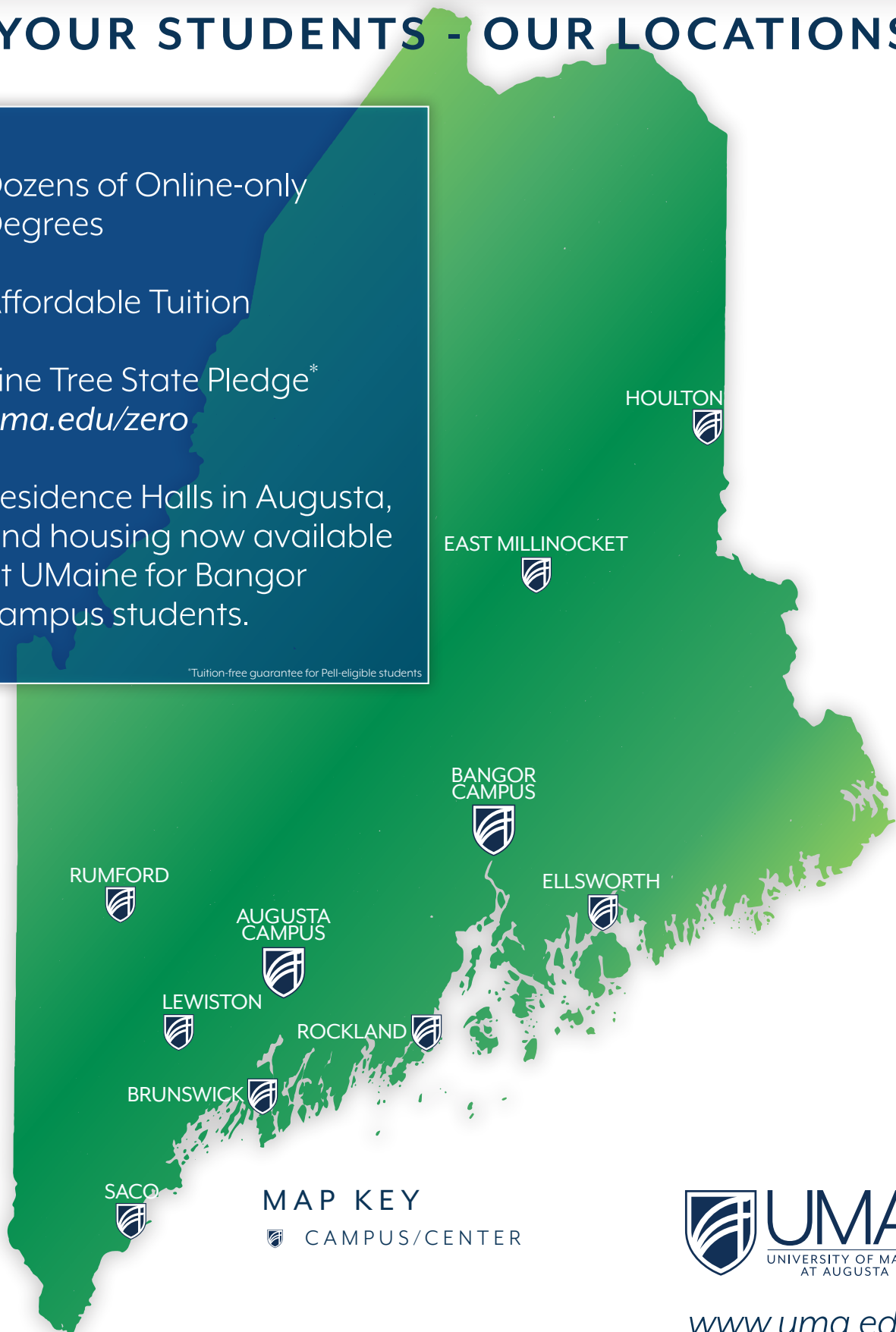


January 3-5, 2024
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Conference Welcome

On behalf of the Maine Educational Opportunity Association, the conference committee would like to take a second to welcome everyone to our 41st Annual Conference. When we started planning this conference, we started with the idea that we wanted to put together an event that represented all of the diverse programs that MEEOA represents. We have always felt that the strength of TRIO lies in partnerships built on long-term relationships between both fellow TRIO programs, and like-minded community partners, and we have done our best to bring all of those relationships together in Augusta!

We also felt that we had to recognize that 2023 has had very traumatic stretches. Recently, the tragic shooting in Lewiston Maine this fall had a huge impact on our community, including several programs that serve participants in the Lewiston area. We recognize that the deaf community in Maine is a tight-knit group that was devastated by the loss of several of their members during this tragedy. During hard times, the perseverance and empathy of our staff and programs serve as a guiding light to our participants, but also to each other.

We hope that we have put together a conference where we can all re-connect, and continue to build our partnerships and relationships.

Thank you for joining us!

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More than 50 of our 2023 scholarship recipients participated in high school TRIO programs!

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The Maine Educational Opportunity Association would like to thank all of our many partners and sponsors!

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MEEEOA Conference 2024 Schedule

Time	Session	Location
Wednesday, January 3rd		
1:00 – 4:00 pm	Pre-Conference: Using Intentional Serendipity to Create Opportunities and How To Use the Holland Code with Jim Peacock	Jewett Hall Room 180
Thursday, January 4th		
8:15 - 9:15 am	Check-in and Registration Coffee/Tea Break – Sponsored by the Worthington Foundation	Jewett Hall
9:15 - 9:30 am	Welcome	Auditorium
9:30 - 10:30 am	Keynote – Erin Benson	Auditorium
10:45 - 11:45 am	Breakout Workshops Session I <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KVCC 2024 – What You Need to Know • Maine GEAR UP Study on the Class of 2020 • UMF/UMA – Behavioral Health Partnership 	Room 190 Room 189 Room 180
11:45 am - 12:45 pm	Lunch	Fireside Lounge
1:00 - 2:00 pm	Breakout Workshops Session II McKinney Vento – Connecting Student to Support Student Success and Data Supported Interventions SSS Directors: Grant Planning Session What You Need to Know About the New FAFSA	Room 190 Room 189 Room 289 Room 180
2:00 - 2:15 pm	Coffee Break – Sponsored by Kennebec Valley Community College	Jewett Hall
2:30 - 3:30 pm	Breakout Workshop Session III <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ChatGPT Goes to College • Emotional Intelligence – Why Connection & Belonging Begins With Us • Early College Coursework for Maine High School Students 	Room 180 Room 189 Room 190
3:30 - 5:30 pm	Break	
5:30 - 6:00 pm	Reception & President’s Welcome	Fireside Lounge
6:00 - 9:00 pm	Banquet and Awards	Fireside Lounge
Friday, January 5th		
8:00 - 9:00	Breakfast Buffet	Fireside Lounge
8:30 - 9:00 am	NEOA Update	Fireside Lounge
9:00 - 10:00 am	COE Update and TRIO History with Jen Rudolph	Fireside Lounge
10:15 - 11:30 am	Business Meeting	Fireside Lounge
11:30	Closing	Fireside Lounge

Pre-Conference: Using Intentional Serendipity to Create Opportunities and How To Use the Holland Code

Using Intentional Serendipity to Create Opportunities

In a perfect world, assessments can assist a client in choosing an occupation. But, the chaos of life often complicates things for all of us. This workshop will look at what we can do to help a person “Plan” their “Happenstance” or what I call “intentional serendipity”. Learn how to help students create unplanned events and to look at career exploration as an opportunity to discover new occupations. Discover ways that you can use intentional serendipity in your daily work. Based upon the Happenstance Learning Theory.

Holland Interest Theory - How it works and possible problems

This portion of the workshop explores the Holland Interest theory, the #1 career interest theory in the world for assisting people in understanding the world of work. Holland is a trait-factor theory that simply states that “if you like to do these kinds of activities, then you will most likely want to do these types of jobs”. We will explore the 6 Holland types, do a Holland-based assessment, and explore what works and what does not work at times with this theory. We will learn about the importance of congruent scores and differentiation between scores.



Jim Peacock, Principal of Peak-Careers Consulting

Jim Peacock is an award-winning career development specialist and owner of Peak-Careers. He has more than 25 years of experience giving career advisors and counselors the tools to help their clients to find the work they love to do.

Peak-Careers offers professional development opportunities for career practitioners, He is a Certified Career Services Provider. He is a Trustee at Large on the National Career Development Association, Board Member and a two-time President of Maine-CDA. He has been recognized for his expertise by the NCDA Outstanding Career Practitioner Award., the Ken Hoyt Career Education Practitioner Award from NCDA, as well as, the Mid-Atlantic Career Counseling Association Professional Contributors award. In addition, he is the author of *A Field Guide for Career Practitioners: Helping Clients Create Their Next Move*. Learn more at <https://peak-careers.com/>



**Erin Benson, Executive Director
Central Western Maine Workforce Development Board**

Erin Benson is the Executive Director of the Central Western Maine Workforce Development Board. Erin brings her knowledge of the workforce program, from her previous positions with Eastern Maine Development Corporation serving as Senior Director of Workforce Services, and the Aroostook County Action Program where she oversaw Workforce Development and the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP). She began at ACAP in December 2017 working with a grant to train women for direct employment or an apprenticeship in non-traditional occupations.

Previously, she worked at the University of Maine at Presque Isle for 24 years as Director of University Relations and then the Director of Admissions and was in radio prior to that.

Erin is a past member of Kiwanis, was president of Presque Isle Youth Hockey and Music Boosters, and has served on several community boards. She is the mother of two adult children.



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Jen Rudolph, Associate Vice President, State Initiatives Council for Opportunity in Education

Jen has been working to help people navigate their paths through education, work, and life for over twenty years. A bachelor's degree from Indiana University in Human Development & Family Studies and a master's degree in Experiential Education from Minnesota State University has provided an educational foundation that enables her to assist people, projects and programs to reach their highest potential.

Jen has worked in many educational environments including college campuses, wilderness therapy programs, and non-profits. For ten years Jen led the Pre-College Opportunity Programs at Cornell University growing one federally funded TRIO Upward Bound grant into a portfolio of programming that included two federal and one state funded college access grant, two programming partnership grants and a dozen other outreach programs. In 2020 she joined the Council for Opportunity in Education, a DC based non-profit that works to increase access to higher education for low income, first generation and underrepresented students across the country. Here, she began as the Director of Pre-College and State Initiatives and now serves as the Associate Vice President of State Policy.

Jen lives outside of Ithaca NY with her three children, enjoys exploring natural places and appreciates rare unscheduled time.



**Lindsay Carpenter, NEOA President
Director of Upward Bound, Lyndon Institute**

Lindsay Carpenter is the Director of an Upward Bound program at her high school alma mater, Lyndon Institute in Lyndonville, VT. Prior to this role she was an Outreach Counselor for five years with Vermont Student Assistance Corporation (VSAC) Talent Search program. She is also a proud alum of NVU-Lyndon's Upward Bound Program, VSAC Talent Search and UVM's SSS program.

Lindsay has been involved in TRIO leadership within her state and region for the past five years serving as the Vermont Educational Opportunity Program (VEOP) President-Elect (2018-2020) and President (2020-2022). Lindsay participated in COE's Executive Leadership Institute (2019) and NEOA's Arnold Mitchem Leadership Institute (2021) and has always credited TRIO for her academic and professional success. #TRIOWORKS!

Lindsay has a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology from the University of Vermont (2006) and a Master's of Education (Curriculum and Instruction) from Northern Vermont University Lyndon (2017). She lives in the Northeast Kingdom of Vermont with her husband Brandon, two sons Arlo and Theo, and chocolate lab, Gus. In her free time she enjoys reading, puzzles, playing cribbage and fishing with her sons and dance parties in the kitchen.

MEEOA Rising Star

The MEEOA Rising Star Award identifies emerging professionals who are former participants of Maine's educational opportunity programs. This award recognizes people just beginning to make an impact in their careers and communities and honors emerging leaders who strive toward the highest levels of personal and professional accomplishment. They excel in their chosen field, devote time and energy to their community in a meaningful way, and serve as a role model for others. Rising Stars demonstrate excellence, creativity, and initiative in their profession. They have an Associate's or Bachelor's degree from an accredited institution of higher education, or are an outstanding senior-level student. They engage in or are developing leadership roles in civic, community, or professional development activities. Rising Stars have participated in an educational opportunity program that has had a significant impact upon their ability to achieve educational and/or professional objectives.

MEEOA Rising Star 2024 - Larissa Holland



Larissa Holland has been an invaluable member of the UB program at Bowdoin College since 2013, participating in UB summer sessions in high school, working as summer staff, and now as the guardian of her younger sibling who is a current student in the program. Coming from the rural hamlet of Jonesboro, in remote Washington County, tragedy struck Larissa's life in her early teens with the loss of her father. Despite this significant loss, she emerged as a leader and role model in the community, excelling at both UB and Washington Academy and earning a place in Smith College's class of 2020.

At Smith, she navigated her first gen experience with aplomb and excelled academically. In 2019, she was one of just 55 students in the US to receive the prestigious Udall Scholarship, recognizing scholarship, leadership, and a commitment to a career in the environmental field. She also earned an equally prestigious internship with NOAA. In the second half of her academic career, she lost her mom and beloved grandparents; Larissa pressed on. She celebrated her commencement on a Zoom call with all the people who had supported her to this amazing moment of becoming a Smith College graduate, from Smith to Downeast Maine.

She now divides her time between Jonesboro and Portland, working as an aviation sustainability consultant, rural youth organizer, and development advisor for JustME for JustUS, an organization that works to empower and mobilize youth around climate justice and community health. In October, she was nominated and appointed to GrowSmart Maine's board of directors, a term which she will start in January 2024.



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MEEOA Lifelong Learner Award

The MEEOA Lifelong Learner award was developed in 2020 by the Executive Committee and Alumni Committee to recognize lifelong learners who are former or current participants of Maine's educational opportunity programs, TRIO and other educational opportunity programs alike. The Lifelong Learner Award honors those current participants and alumni who demonstrate a lifelong love of learning and a dedication to learning experiences whether inside or outside the classroom.

MEEOA Lifelong Learner 2024 - Ali Edwards



Ali Edwards has been a participant in SMCC's TRIO SSS program since spring 2022. Ali came to our office after taking a 6+ year break from SMCC and our office hasn't been the same ever since. She has become an integral member of our community, advancing rapidly from a student-worker to a student employee (unprecedented in our office), and eventually our sole practicum student this Fall. We felt comfortable asking Ali to step into these roles because she seamlessly interacts with students, staff, and leadership. When helping in the TRIO space, she is present and mindful of being inclusive of those who have been marginalized or feel forgotten. She builds trust and rapport with people by simply being a genuine person who knows what it's like to endure and overcome hardship.

The list of Ali's accomplishments are long and will continue to grow. Some of the highlights include: Receiving both the Maine Community Foundation's Adult Learner Scholarship and SMCC's Foundation Scholarship; being only one of 20 single mothers selected in Maine to participate in Project HOME Mother's Trust Pilot program; and advocating to lawmakers through opportunities with the Maine Equal Justice (MEJ) and Mayors and Counties for a Guaranteed Income about the benefits of Universal Basic Income. This semester, Ali also developed and led a group focused on discussion with students about SAMHA's eight domains of wellness. We are fully confident that Ali will reach her goal of obtaining her Masters in Social Work and advocating for Maine's most vulnerable individuals and our larger community.

MEEOA Achiever Award

MEEOA Achiever Awards are given to outstanding graduates of Maine's educational opportunity programs. MEEOA Achievers have received a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution of higher education and are recognized as a person of high stature within their profession or have received recognition for their outstanding academic achievements. Achievers are employed above the entry-level designation for their profession or have received a post baccalaureate degree or are enrolled in a post baccalaureate program. They have made significant civic, community, or professional contributions. Their participation in an educational opportunity program has had a significant impact upon their ability to achieve educational and/or professional objectives.

MEEOA Achiever Award 2024 - Lana Cook



Lana Cook, Ph.D., has participated in three TRIO programs, including Upward Bound at UMO with Lori Wingo, and SSS and McNair at UNH. Since completing her doctorate at Northeastern University in 2014, she has been employed at MIT for just under a decade in a wide variety of roles. Her current role is serving as Associate Director with the MIT Systems Awareness Lab. During her tenure at MIT, Lana has been on the forefront of their efforts to share intellectual and academic resources in open source knowledge and technology, with a particular emphasis on expanding access

to underserved communities.

Lana is deeply skilled at combining her caring nature, academic preparation, and intellect to organize events that promote social justice and make the world a better place. Her work at MIT has initiated conferences and gatherings focused on raising awareness of the lived experiences of refugees and migrants, designing workforce pathways for displaced communities, and exploring the potential of AI and education. She has also been working directly with educators running professional development opportunities about “Compassionate Systems Framework,” a toolkit that combines systems thinking, social-emotional learning, and leadership development to support educators and young people in advancing change in their local communities.

In Lana’s words, “Both Upward Bound and McNair gave me the confidence, tools, and knowledge to pursue higher education. My education was enriched by the peer and mentor networks that these programs provided. These programs definitely prepared me for the rigors of both undergraduate and graduate education. I feel very much indebted to Upward Bound and McNair for the gift of education” (NEOA Alumni Directory). It certainly feels like the right time for this triple TRIO Alumna, scholar, expansive practitioner, and devoted social justice advocate to be recognized as a TRIO Achiever in her native state of Maine.

MEEOA President's Award



MEEOA President's Award 2024 - Myles Ouellette

Myles Ouellette has a very deep connection with TRIO programs. As a student at Van Buren High School, Myles participated in both Upward Bound and Educational Talent Search programs. Soon after graduation, he enlisted in the Army. While serving he was injured and sadly developed an addiction to painkillers. Addiction brought him to prison and prison was where he found the Maine Educational Opportunity Program. As a MEOC participant he took time to explore his options, options he never saw as possible. With guidance, Myles developed a plan to begin his educational journey at the University of Maine at Augusta. Part of that plan included a referral to the UMA TRIO Scholars Program where he received amazing support. Myles graduated from UMA with a Bachelor's degree in Applied Science in 2017, along with an Addiction Studies Minor, was in the UMA Honors Program, and graduated Summa Cum Laude. Myles's dream did not end there, he went on to complete an MBA in Healthcare Management from Husson University and graduated in 2018 with a 3.93 GPA.

Myles's professional life has focused on recovery and addiction treatment. Currently, he is working as a Clinical Supervisor with the Presque Isle Comprehensive Treatment Center. From 2020-2023 he worked for GROUPS Recover Together, as a Facilitator and Community Development Manager where he was responsible for expanding the program statewide. In addition to this, Myles co-facilitated a nurturing father's class for the inmates at the Knox County Jail and was a Mentor for the Restorative Justice Project, where he mentored first-time offender youth, and In 2022 he was appointed to the Maine Recovery Council by the Senate President.

According to Myles, Maine TRIO helped him find his life's purpose and empowered him to reach his full potential. Myles, credits TRIO not only with helping him to complete postsecondary education but also with saving his life. As a way of giving back, Myles has been an amazing voice in support of TRIO programming. In 2018, Myles attended the Council for Opportunity in Education Policy Seminar and was keynote at Maine's Hall of Flags. He has worked as a recruiter for the Maine Educational Opportunity Center and the Veteran's Upward Bound program. Most recently, Myles participated in the amazing First Gen Day 2023.

In November 2022, the Council for Opportunity in Education (COE) selected Myles Ouellette from a national pool to represent Educational Opportunity programming in celebration of the 50th Anniversary of Educational Opportunity Centers nationwide. On May 2, 2023, Myles's story was recognized by Senator Susan Collins on the floor of the senate as she was fighting for continued support of TRIO programming and as an example of how TRIO programs play a critical role in helping first-generation, low-income families seek higher education opportunities.

Breakout Workshops - Session 1

Thursday, January 4 10:45 - 11:45 am

KVCC 2024 - What you need to know.

Room 190

2024 will bring big changes to higher education in Maine, and KVCC will be leading the way. In this session we will cover what college access professionals need to know to prepare students for KVCC. In this session we will cover New KVCC Programs and Partnerships, New Admissions Processes, Student Support Initiatives, and so much more. This will be an interactive session, so bring your questions.

Teresa Smith, Director of Enrollment, Kennebec Valley Community College

Maine GEAR UP Study on the Class of 2020

Room 189

In 2020 the US Department of Education awarded the Maine State GEAR UP program a supplemental five year award to study the enrollment, persistence and completion of the Maine GEAR UP class of 2020. US ED funded nine states to study the impact on the pandemic. Julie Jaramillo, Maine's external evaluator from Xcalibur and Debbie Gilmer, GEAR UP Project Director, will share the findings to date.

Debbie Gilmer, Syntiro President and GEAR UP Project Director and Julie Jaramillo, MSDA, Director of Data Insights and Evaluation, Xcalibur

UMF/UMA -Behavioral Health Partnership

Room 180

This presentation will be about the current collaboration between the UMA Mental Health & Human Services degree program and the UMF Rehabilitation & Human Services degree program. You will learn about the program's goals, structure, funding and current student impacts. Student barriers to higher education, program promotion efforts and challenges associated with a Univ. of Maine System (UMS) multi-campus collaboration will also be discussed.

Wendy St. Pierre, Assistant Professor Of Mental Health & Human Services, University of Maine Augusta

Breakout Workshops - Session 2

Thursday, January 4 1:00 - 2:00 pm

McKinney Vento - Connecting Student to Support

Room 190

Summary: Join us for an interactive presentation on the supports available for children and youth experiencing housing instability. We will discuss the McKinney-Vento Act, eligibility, services, unaccompanied homeless youth, and a new Pilot Program to Prevent Student Homelessness. Services are available for students PK to higher education in Maine. We will share resources to make your job easier!

Amelia Lyons Rukema, McKinney Vento Specialist, Maine Department of Education
Singe Lynch, Education & Employment Support Program Coordinator, New Beginnings

Student Success and Data Supported Interventions

Room 189

Changing culture in higher education institutions is not an easy undertaking but necessary to move the needle on success metrics such as graduation and retention rates. Sharing experiences with initiatives to change institutional culture to support student success and using Georgia State University's story of institutional change as a model, paths leading to impactful practices for student success will be explored and how data is key for changing culture.

Grimes Williams, Associate Dean of Student Services, Central Maine Community College

What You Need to Know about the New FAFSA

Room 180

The 2024-2025 Better FAFSA, as it's being referred to by Federal Student Aid (FSA), has been completely overhauled! The revised FAFSA has a different layout with new processes and features. Changes have been made related to FSA IDs, including the ability of people without an SSN to create an FSA ID, and action is required ahead of time before the FAFSA can be filed. Pell Grant eligibility has been expanded and is more transparent and the pathway for students with challenging situations has been made easier. During this session, I'll focus on the most important changes, share tips and recommendations, and explain some new terminology and concepts. Whether you're familiar with the "old" FAFSA or are brand new to the process, join me to learn more about the new, Better FAFSA!

Mila Tappan, College Access and Outreach Manager, Finance Authority Of Maine

SSS Director's Roundtable

Room 289

This space has been reserved for SSS Director's looking for a space to talk about the upcoming grant competition.

Breakout Workshops - Session 3

Thursday, January 4 2:30 - 3:30 pm

ChatGPT Goes to College

Room 190

In the past year we have seen an explosive growth in AI. ChatGPT, Bard, and the like have grabbed headlines and forced a reconsideration of the role of technology in education. Let's take a look at the disruption - both the potential and the peril - as students and faculty alike adapt to the reality of these new tools.

Rocko Graziano, Lecturer, Data Science and Computer Information Systems, University of Maine at Augusta

Emotional Intelligence – Why Connection & Belonging Begins With Us

Room 190

Join Maine Department of Education's SEL Specialist Kellie Doyle Bailey for this dynamic and experiential learning opportunity while you learn the 5 key elements of how human beings form habits of knowledge, dispositions, develop awareness of thoughts, feelings and emotions, manage emotions, engage in healthy relationships, understand compassion, empathy and perspective taking and how to maintain meaningful connections with others. Kellie will demonstrate through shared experiences and in providing an overview of the Maine Department of Education's adults EI/SEL resources aimed to support adults in their development of emotional intelligence in self awareness, self management, social awareness, relationships and responsible decision making skills. When adults do our work first we can help children of all ages develop habits of "felt-safety" for improved social and school engagement, connection and participation. Prepare to be delighted and engaged!

Kellie Doyle Bailey MA CCC-SLP MMT/SELI SEL Specialist Maine Department of Education

Early College Coursework for Maine High School Students

Room 190

Presentation will focus on the early college opportunities supported by the Department of Education in partnership with the Maine Community College and the University of Maine systems. The Department administers two early college programs. The Aspirations program provides funding for up to 12 credits annually for eligible secondary school students and the Early College Grant program provides opportunities for CTE students to receive college credit while they complete their program of study requirements. The discussion will include eligibility, counseling and advising, and pathways intended to improve student success for potential postsecondary enrollment opportunities. Participants should keep in mind how they might use this information to encourage students who might not otherwise consider postsecondary education, to take part in these free or low cost college-credit bearing opportunities.

Jason C. Libby, Ph.D., Education Pathways and Early College Coordinator,
Office of Workforce Development and Innovative Pathways, Maine Department of Education

MEEOA Presidents

1984-1985 - Jerry Ellis (UM SSS)	2004-2005 - Ginny Fowles-Ward (Bowdoin UB)
1985-1986 - Ludger Duplessis (Bowdoin UB)	2005-2006 - Faith Erhardt (UM UB)
1986-1987 - Claire Nelson (UMF SSS)	2006-2007 - Danette Madore (UMPI UB)
1987-1988 - Dave Megquier (UM EOC and ETS)	2007-2008 - Steve Visco (UM EOC and ETS)
1988-1989 - Scott Bradley (Bowdoin UB)	2008-2009 - Linda Rottmann (UM SSS)
1989-1990 - Lynn Ploof-Davis (UMF UB)	2009-2010 - Sarah Sockalexis (UM ETS)
1990-1991 -	2010-2011 - Laurie Davis (USM SSS and UB)
1991-1992 -	2011-2012 - Jess Berry (UMF UB)
1992-1993 - Jane Kimball Foley (UM ETS)	2012-2013 - Shawn Graham (UMFK SSS)
1993-1994 -	2013-2014 - Chris Turner (USM UB)
1994-1995 -	2014-2015 - Kelly Ilseman (UM UBMS)
1995-1996 -	2015-2016 - Teri Mann (UM EOC)
1996-1997 - Jane Kimball-Foley (UM ETS)	2016-2017 - Laurie Davis (USM SSS and UB)
1996-1997 - Carol Brush	2017-2018 - Dori Fellman (Syntiro GEAR UP)
1997-1998 - Judy Look (UMaine ETS)	2018-2019 - Mary Kate Barbosa (UMPI SSS)
1998-1999 - Maureen Ferriter (UM SSS)	2019-2020 - Steve Visco (UM ETS and EOC)
1999-2000 - Dave Megquier (UM EOC and ETS)	2020-2021 - Mary Sinclair (UMF UB)
2000-2001 - Johannah Burdin (USM UB)	2021-2022 - Samantha Prosser (USM UB)
2001-2002 - Michelle Melanson (Bowdoin UB)	2022-2023 - Terry Charlton (CMCC SSS)
2002-2003 - Sara Henry (UM SSS)	2023-2024 - Ginny Fowles-Ward (Bowdoin UB)
2003-2004 - Teresa Smith (KVCC SSS)	

New England Educational Opportunity Center Presidents from Maine

1984 – 1985 Doris Vladmiroff	2005 – 2006 David Megquier
1985 – 1986 Matthew Lamstein	2013 – 2014 Karen Keim
1992 – 1993 Jerry Ellis	2017 – 2018 Jane Kimball Foley
1999 – 2000 Kristi Pierce	

The Council for Opportunity in Education (COE) Chairs from Maine

2007 – 2008 David Megquier

Maine Educational Opportunity Association

Member Programs

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Upward Bound
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Washington County Community College

Student Support Services
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*"A rising tide doesn't raise people who don't have a boat.
We have to build the boat for them. We have to give them the basic
infrastructure to rise with the tide."*

- Rahul Gandhi

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The GEAR UP Maine program is funded through a grant (reference #PP334S230003; Marques Thomas, Project Officer) from the U.S. Department of Education to University of Maine at Farmington administered by Syntiro.

