

Maine Educational Opportunity Association



Factbook 2024-2025

Return on Investment: TRIO is federal money well spent.

Impactful Life-Changing Programs

“I cannot even begin to hope to describe all the ways that UMF Upward Bound has and continues to impact my life...



...it was one of the most important and formative experiences I have ever had. Upward Bound made it possible for me to go to college; the process became so simple and understandable. I feel that I learnt more about myself and about school in the months spent at UMF than I ever would have in the years I spent at high school. Although UMF Upward Bound was for the underprivileged, I believe we were the privileged ones by being able to go.” -

Jasmine Bussiere, 2014-2016

“If I hadn’t had TRIO to help me earlier, I would never have attained an MBA. Without my MBA, I would never have gone on in my career to create over \$40 million in new growth for businesses in Maine.”

-Brandon McDonald (METS, UB, SSS, 2006-2013)

PROGRAM SUCCESS HIGHLIGHTS

- UMF UB: 100% of students in the 2024 cohorts graduated from high school, with 74% having done so with a rigorous curriculum. 81% of those students enrolled in a post-secondary institution.
- Bowdoin UB: 54% of 2018 graduates completed a degree within 6 years compared to only 21% of low-income, first-generation college students nationally.
- EMCC SSS: Exceeded all objectives again notably including a persistence rate of 80%, and good academic standing rate 81%.
- METS: 97.6% of participants graduated high school, 57.3% completed a PSE program within 6 years.
- MEOC: Enrolled or re-enrolled 460 participants into PSE last year.



SSS students from EMCC celebrating First-Gen day and grant-aid recipients !



On the cover: Students from across the state engaging in various activities. UB students from UMPI visiting Portland and Augusta, Maine. SSS students from USM participating in Advocacy Day. SSS students from KVCC in Lewiston and Waterville, meeting TRIO alum Churchill Elangwe-Preston, founder of Mbingo Mountain Coffee.

President's Update

TRIO: Empowering Students for 60 Years

For six decades, TRIO programs have provided educational opportunities to economically disadvantaged, first-generation, and disabled students—populations historically underserved in higher education. TRIO's mission is to ensure that access to education is not determined by wealth, parental education, or disability status. Today, over 3,200 TRIO programs nationwide serve more than 860,000 students, leveling the playing field and fostering success.

In Maine, TRIO serves over 7,500 students across 30 programs, supporting middle schoolers to adult learners. TRIO breaks down barriers by offering college preparation, career exploration, academic support, financial literacy, mentoring, leadership development, and more. For many, TRIO is more than a program—it's a family and a crucial support system. TRIO professionals understand what it takes to help students not only access college but persist and graduate, strengthening Maine's workforce and economy in the process.

We already know that TRIO works. Since its inception, it has helped over 6 million students earn college degrees. TRIO participants are four times more likely to graduate and twice as likely to persist in higher education. As a TRIO alum, I have experienced firsthand how these programs change lives. TRIO gave me the support I needed to focus on academics and navigate the college journey, shaping my path and inspiring my career.

The impact of TRIO is undeniable. It transforms students' lives, uplifts families, and strengthens communities. With increasing threats to TRIO funding, we must protect these vital programs to ensure a brighter, more equitable future for all.

Michelle Richards
MEEOA President, 2024-2025



Rising Star Award Recipients

The MEEOA Rising Star Award recognizes emerging professionals who participated in Maine's educational opportunity programs. These individuals are early in their careers but already making meaningful contributions to their field and community. They demonstrate leadership, excellence, and innovation while serving as role models. Eligible recipients have completed or are nearing completion of a degree and are actively engaged in civic or professional development.



Joy's passion for learning was sparked at a young age and deepened through a transformative experience with Bowdoin's Upward Bound program, which helped her navigate higher education despite limited family resources. After earning a Sociology and American Studies degree from Stonehill College in 2016, she served with AmeriCorps before returning to Upward Bound as an Academic Counselor. Inspired by her commitment to helping others, she pursued nursing during the pandemic, earning her RN in 2022 and working in Emergency and Labor & Delivery. Recognizing the importance of education in nursing, she now aspires to advance her studies to mentor future nurses, continuing the cycle of guidance that shaped her journey.

MEEO Rising Star award winner, Bradley Burden, a first-generation, non-traditional college student from a low-income background, has overcome significant challenges, including homelessness, early parenthood, struggles with drugs, and incarceration. After working in car sales, the uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic pushed him to pursue higher education for stability and employability. Over the years, he has been actively involved in multiple TRIO programs, participating in three and working as a peer mentor for two SSS programs. Passionate about the opportunities TRIO provides, Bradley is dedicated to advocating for the program and raising awareness of its transformative impact on individuals facing adversity.



Award recipients received their honors at this year's annual MEEOA Conference. Professionals from programs across the state met in Augusta in January 2025 to train in best practices and share and celebrate in the success of our students.

Achiever Award Recipients

The MEEOA Achiever Award honors distinguished graduates of Maine's educational opportunity programs who have earned a bachelor's degree and achieved prominence in their field. Recipients hold positions beyond entry level, pursue or have completed advanced degrees, and contribute significantly to their community or profession. Their participation in an educational opportunity program has been instrumental in their academic and professional success.



Matthew Leavitt's life was profoundly influenced by his involvement with Upward Bound, which he joined in 2001 as a high school sophomore. Growing up in Millinocket, Maine, in a family facing mental health and substance abuse challenges, he sought connection and support through the program. Upward Bound provided him with academic, emotional, and social support, helping him develop resilience and a sense of purpose. He later earned Master's degrees in Fine Arts and Higher Education, remained closely connected to the program, and even created a documentary about its impact. Matthew now works for the Maine Department of Education as a Web and Technology Coordinator, supporting educators while continuing to advocate for equal access to life-changing opportunities.

Matthew Theriault credits the UMPI Upward Bound program with transforming his life, offering him academic and personal support when military enlistment was no longer an option due to chronic health issues. The program not only introduced him to the possibility of college but also provided a sense of belonging that inspired him to pursue social work. After earning a bachelor's degree, he worked in various social work roles, including as an Upward Bound counselor and in schools and substance abuse clinics. Recently completing his Master's in Social Work, he now supports high school students in Maryland as they transition to post-secondary education, dedicated to giving back to the program that shaped his path.



TRIO programs strengthen the economy. When TRIO students attain college degrees, every dollar spent on getting them there is returned to the federal government in tax dollars.

The Federal TRIO Programs...

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY CENTER (EOC)

Maine's EOC program worked with 2,269 participants last year at an average cost of just \$359 per participant.

This program serves the entire state.

460 Maine EOC participants enrolled in Post-Secondary Education (PSE) last year.

MEOC offered academic advising, personal counseling, career workshops, college and financial aid application assistance, default loan rehabilitation, test preparation, and financial and economic literacy education.

EDUCATIONAL TALENT SEARCH (ETS)

Maine's 2 Educational Talent Search programs worked with 1,611 participants last year at an average cost of just \$577 per participant.

These programs serve Androscoggin, Aroostook, Cumberland, Oxford, Penobscot, and Waldo counties.

57.3% of UM Talent Search participants completed PSE within 6 years.

ETS program services include academic, financial, and career counseling; exposure to college campuses; tutoring services; assistance in completing the college admissions process; and assisting with financial aid applications.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES (SSS)

Maine's 16 SSS programs served 2,865 students at an average cost of just \$1,940 per participant.

These programs serve Androscoggin, Aroostook, Cumberland, Franklin, Kennebec, Penobscot, and Washington counties.

88% of reported students are in good standing, and 85% are continuing in PSE.

SSS program services may include intensive academic, financial, and personal counseling, tutoring services, and assistance completing graduate school, and financial aid applications.

TRIO Programs in Maine (and nationally) are directly addressing bipartisan priorities like: economic mobility, workforce development, educational choice, and increasing the tax base, which improve constituents' lives.

...serving the needs of Maine's students!

UPWARD BOUND (UB)

Maine's 9 UB programs served 641 participants at an average cost of \$5,222 per participant.

These programs serve Androscoggin, Aroostook, Cumberland, Franklin, Kennebec, Lincoln, Oxford, Penobscot, Piscataquis, Sagadahoc, Somerset, Washington, and York counties.

Over 50% of 2018's participants completed a degree within 6 years.

Nationally, only 21% of low-income, first-generation college students complete a bachelor's in 6 years. (National Center for Education Statistics)

Services students received include academic instruction in math, science, composition, literature and foreign language; tutoring and mentoring; academic, financial, and personal counseling; assistance completing college and financial aid applications; and career exploration.

UPWARD BOUND MATH/SCIENCE (UBMS)

Maine's Upward Bound Math Science program served 67 participants at an average cost of \$5,489 per participant.

This program serves Cumberland, Franklin, Piscataquis, and Somerset counties.

79% of graduating seniors enrolled in PSE.

This program includes an intensive summer program focusing on math and science training, year-round counseling and advising, computer training, exposure to university faculty who perform research in math and science, and scientific research conducted under the guidance of a faculty or graduate student mentor.*

VETERANS UPWARD BOUND (VUB)

Maine's Veterans Upward Bound program served 125 participants at an average cost of \$2,476 per participant.

This program serves the entire state.

80% of the 2021 cohort completed PSE.

Services included connection to qualifying veterans benefits; academic, financial, and personal counseling; tutoring services; refresher classes for subjects required in college; assistance completing college and financial aid applications; and basic skills development.

*UBMS services also include tutoring and mentoring; academic, financial, and personal counseling; assistance completing college and financial aid applications, and career exploration.

Program	Students Served	Budget
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Educational Opportunity Center

University of Maine	<u>2,269</u>	<u>\$814,113</u>
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Educational Talent Search

University of Maine	1,111	\$640,981
<u>University of Maine at Presque Isle</u>	<u>500</u>	<u>\$288,470</u>
2 Educational Talent Search Projects	1,611	\$928,451

Student Support Services

Central Maine Community College (2 separate projects)	295	\$620,879
Eastern Maine Community College	150	\$272,364
Kennebec Valley Community College	180	\$352,531
Northern Maine Community College	175	\$306,511
Southern Maine Community College (2 separate projects)	240	\$544,728
Thomas College	140	\$272,364
University of Maine	400	\$694,807
University of Maine at Augusta	340	\$566,531
University of Maine at Farmington	180	\$352,530
University of Maine at Fort Kent	165	\$356,773
University of Maine at Presque Isle	180	\$373,084
University of Southern Maine (2 separate projects)	260	\$544,728
<u>Washington County Community College</u>	<u>160</u>	<u>\$302,915</u>
16 Student Support Services Projects	2,865	\$5,558,249

Upward Bound

Bowdoin College (two separate projects)	167	\$859,462
University of Maine	60	\$309,505
University of Maine at Farmington (2 separate projects)	158	\$747,089
University of Maine at Presque Isle (2 separate projects)	129	\$749,621
<u>University of Southern Maine (2 separate projects)</u>	<u>130</u>	<u>\$681,380</u>
9 Upward Bound Projects	644	\$3,347,057

Upward Bound Math-Science

<u>University of Maine</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>\$367,734</u>
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Veterans Upward Bound

<u>University of Southern Maine</u>	<u>108</u>	<u>\$309,505</u>
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7,564	\$11,326,109
Participants	Total Federal Funding

All TRIO programs work to develop students' 21st-century skills, financial literacy, leadership, professional, and networking skills.

Cultivating Talented Leaders

KVCC's TRIO SSS program empowers students to embrace their leadership potential through SOC 209: Leadership for Changemakers. Unlike traditional leadership courses, SOC 209 is designed specifically for TRIO students, recognizing the unique strengths they bring—resilience, resourcefulness, and a deep commitment to their communities.



The course fosters personal growth while equipping students with tangible leadership skills, including project management, design thinking, and effective communication through podcasting, video creation, and graphic design. Guest speakers and experiential learning opportunities connect students with Maine-based professionals, organizations, and career pathways, ensuring they graduate with confidence and connections.

Students put their leadership into action through semester-long service learning projects of their own design, addressing real-world needs in their communities. Past projects have included establishing a food pantry and veterans lounge on campus, leading sustainability initiatives, creating public art installations, and fundraising for local charities. Rooted in adaptive, servant, and transformational leadership principles, SOC 209 challenges students to step outside their comfort zones and into leadership identities.

With the right support, TRIO students don't just succeed—they become changemakers shaping the future of Maine. Dirigo!



KVCC's SOC 209 students exploring UMaine's Fogler Library, volunteering at the Good Shepherd food bank and learning about additive manufacturing at the 3D printed prototype house at the University of Maine.

Program Directory

Bowdoin College

Upward Bound

Project Director: Ginny Ward, vfowles@bowdoin.edu

<https://www.bowdoin.edu/upward-bound/>

Central Maine Community College

Student Support Services

Project Director: Terry Charlton, tcharlton@cmcc.edu

<https://www.cmcc.edu/academics/support/trio-student-support-services>

Eastern Maine Community College

Student Support Services

Project Director: Michael Schwabenbauer mschwabenbauer@emcc.edu

<http://www.emcc.edu/academics/support/trio-student-support-services>

Kennebec Valley Community College

Student Support Services

Project Director: Lisa Black, lblack@kvcc.me.edu

<http://www.kvcc.me.edu/academics/support/trio-student-support-services/>

Northern Maine Community College

Student Support Services

Project Director: Johna Lovely, jlvely@mainecc.edu

<https://www.nmcc.edu/academics/support/student-services/trio/>

Southern Maine Community College

Student Support Services

Project Director: Katharine Lualdi, klualdi@smccme.edu

<http://www.smccme.edu/academics/successs-programs/trio/>

Thomas College

Student Support Services

Project Director: Alexandrai Hinnners-Mucci, lexie.hinnnersmucci@thomas.edu

<http://www.thomas.edu/student-life/student-services/trio/>

University of Maine

Educational Opportunity Center & Educational Talent Search

Project Director: Karen Keim, kkeim@maine.edu

<http://meoc.maine.edu>

<http://mets.maine.edu>

Student Support Services

Project Director: Eric Chapman, echapman@maine.edu

<http://www.umaine.edu/sss/>

University of Maine, cont.

Upward Bound & Upward Bound Math-Science
Project Director: Rusty R. Brown, rusty.brown@maine.edu
<http://www.umaine.edu/ub/>

University of Maine Augusta

Student Support Services
Project Director: Anastasia Lima, anastasia.lima@maine.edu
<http://www.uma.edu/academics/student-support/trio-sss/>

University of Maine Farmington

Student Support Services & Upward Bound
Project Director: Lynn Ploof-Davis, lynnp@maine.edu
<https://umf.maine.edu/upwardbound/>
<https://umf.maine.edu/academics/johnson-scholars-program>

University of Maine Fort Kent

Student Support Services
Project Director: Susan Dubay, susan.dubay@maine.edu
<http://www.umfk.edu/student-success/trio/>

University of Maine Presque Isle

Student Support Services
Project Director: Mary Kate Barbosa, mary.barbosa@maine.edu
<http://www.umpi.edu/trio-college-access/>

Talent Search & Upward Bound

Project Director: Carol McGlinn, carol.mcglinn@maine.edu
<https://www.umpi.edu/trio-college-access/educational-talent-search/>
<https://www.umpi.edu/trio-college-access/upward-bound/>

University of Southern Maine

Student Support Services
Project Director: Terri Plummer, teresa.plummer@maine.edu
<http://www.usm.maine.edu/trio-college-programs/>

Upward Bound & Veterans Upward Bound

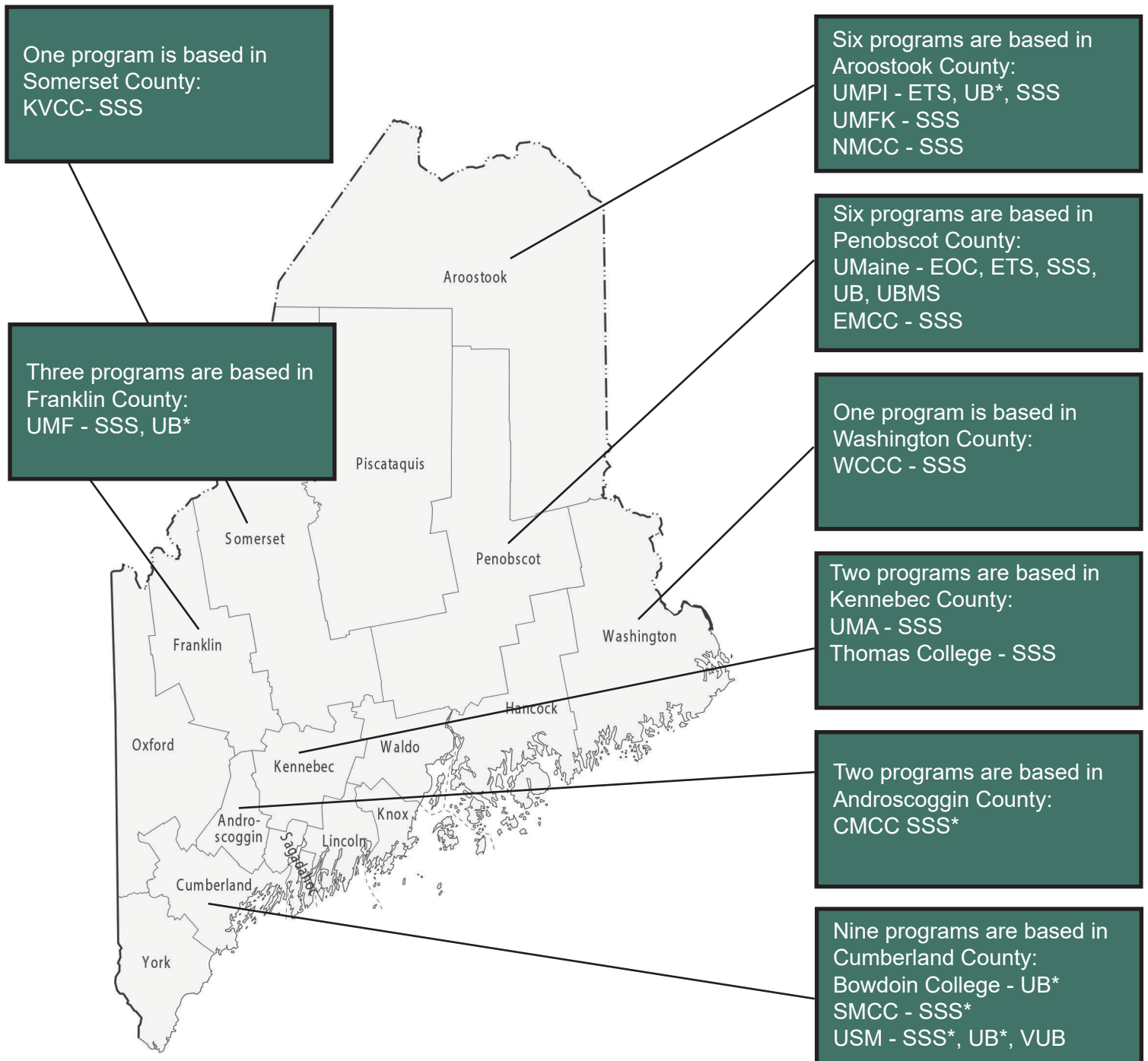
Project Director: Alyssa West, alyssa.west@maine.edu
<http://www.usm.maine.edu/upwardbound/>
<https://usm.maine.edu/upward-bound-veterans-high-school-students/trio-upward-bound>

Washington County Community College

Student Support Services
Project Director: Kieve Leeman, Kleeman@maineccc.edu
<http://www.wccc.me.edu/academics/support/academic-support-2/trio/>

Visit MEEOA.ORG for more information!

The 30 TRIO Programs throughout Maine



Many programs serve multiple counties. More information on that can be found in the center spread of this booklet.
 *Indicates multiple grants of the same type focused on serving specific sub-populations.