



# Annual Report

January 28, 2022





Office of Policy and Legal Analysis  
13 State House Station  
Cross Office Building, Room 215  
Augusta, Maine 04333-0013

January 24, 2022

## **Executive Summary**

The mission of JMG is to identify students who face barriers to education, and to guide each one on to a successful path toward continued education, a meaningful career, and productive adulthood.

The vision of JMG is to be a champion for all Maine students who face barriers to education.

JMG partners with public education and private businesses to offer results-driven solutions to ensure all Maine students graduate, attain post-secondary credentials and pursue meaningful careers.

## **JMG is Student Centered**

As we embark upon the 2021-2022 academic year, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic continues to be a long and grueling trek. How do we navigate from here? At JMG, elevating the talent and humanity of our students — to ensure their value is visible to all — is our true north.

While COVID-19 has affected all students, it has exacerbated inequities for Maine’s most vulnerable students. The Governor’s most recent investment in education, and additional federal stimulus funds dedicated to career exploration, will provide the state with a rare opportunity to close gaps that existed prior to COVID-19, but are now wider than ever due to the pandemic. This is especially true for students from low-income backgrounds, students with disabilities, students experiencing the foster care system or homelessness, and students who face inequities due to race, ethnicity, gender identity or personal, social and academic challenges. JMG proudly serves these students. These are our students.

JMG is the largest statewide education nonprofit in Maine. We are unique as a 501(c)(3) private corporation established by the Maine State Legislature. We were created in 1993 with a legislative mandate to partner with Maine’s public schools to provide a comprehensive dropout prevention and career exploration program for secondary students. In 2016, the Maine State Legislature enacted Public Law 466: “An Act to Improve Student Retention in Maine’s Postsecondary Institutions.” This law designated JMG as a formal partner of Maine’s public university and community college systems. The JMG College Success and JMG Pathway Navigation programs are the first college bridging and persistence services created through a state statute in the nation.

At the core of JMG is our relationship-based approach, and the role our Specialists serve as educators, mentors, and advisors to our students. Our total programs include more than 150 school

partnerships and community collaborations, serving more than 10,000 students annually, in all 16 counties. JMG is the only educational non-profit organization that provides a continuum of support to students from middle school, throughout high school, and onto post-secondary education and career pathways. We serve students as early as sixth grade through the age of 24 years old. We are an open entry, open exit program, and our model is based on follow-up as a service for secondary students, and intrusive advising for post-secondary students.

In the past 28 years, JMG has helped more than 60,000 students overcome their barriers, achieve their aspirations, and become productive members of Maine's workforce.

## **JMG is Results Driven**

JMG relies on rigorous third-party evaluation, and evidence-based strategies to respond to students' academic, social and emotional needs. Through enduring, strategic investments in infrastructure and innovation, JMG has developed and evolved programs and partnerships to best meet the needs of students who would otherwise be underserved.

Maine's workforce crisis has been building for years.

Prior to COVID-19, economic mobility for the youngest members of the workforce was already out of reach for thousands of 14-to-24-year-old residents in our state. Post COVID-19, thousands of Maine's students and older youth will join a growing list of the most vulnerable, their opportunities for advancement too far away to reach or permanently set back because of the pandemic.

We have proven our capacity to make a difference for the most disadvantaged students during the most difficult of times. During the pandemic, JMG forged even stronger connections with our students' families and collaborated in new and agile ways with school administrators, counselors, traditional teachers, college resource teams, and DHHS caseworkers.

As we look ahead, we see opportunities to enhance and expand JMG's programs and reach, including but not limited to:

- Incorporate Diversity, Equity and Inclusion language, practices, and design into professional development, the JMG model, competencies, outcomes and expectations.
- Align student outcomes to the state-supported goal that 60% of Mainers will hold a post-secondary credential by 2025; we are making a commitment that 60% of JMG students will earn a degree or credential of value within six years of high school graduation.
- Deepen JMG's role as an intermediary organization serving as a resource support organization for expanded learning opportunities, bridging public education with the business community and economic needs of the state through career exploration.
- Maximize JMG's competency-based framework to offer a highly relevant, credential-based approach with the support of Thomas College and the Maine State Chamber of Commerce.
- Expand JMG programs both vertically (traditional program growth) with new site partners such as Boys and Girls Clubs and Career & Technical Education Centers; and, horizontally (extending our

reach through partnerships and outreach), including collaborative efforts with the Maine Compass Career Collaborative, Maine GEAR UP, and Full Plates Full Potential.

We are hopeful we are nearing the end of the COVID-19 journey, and that we can return to safer and better times. Prior to COVID-19, there was a need for JMG's mission to help students overcome barriers to success. The need for JMG to deliver on our mission and vision has never been greater or clearer.

JMG ensures equity and inclusion and believes in the investment and development of Maine's human capital. JMG cares for our youth.

JMG will not be satisfied with bringing things "back to normal" for the students we serve.

This is a call to action for JMG, and we are rising to the challenge.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Craig Larrabee in blue ink.

Craig Larrabee  
President & CEO, JMG

Handwritten signature of Kimberley A. Lipp in blue ink.

Kimberley Acker Lipp  
Executive Vice President



ABOUT  
JMG





## Board of Directors

### Executive Committee

**Chair: Jeremy Fischer, Esq.**

Attorney  
Drummond Woodsum

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KnowledgeWorks

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Machias Savings Bank

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Vice President of Finance & Administration  
University of Maine System

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Executive Vice President  
C.M. Cimino, Inc.

**Danielle Ahern**

SVP, Director of Treasury & Payment Services  
Bangor Savings Bank

**Ryan J. Moore**

SVP, Digital Deposits Product Manager  
Bank of America

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**Mike Archer**

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Camden National Bank

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VP, Human Resources  
BIW, General Dynamics

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**Leona Michelsen**

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Gorham School Department

**Dee Sabattus**

Deputy Director  
United South and Eastern Tribes  
(USET)

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Director of Tax  
L.L.Bean, Inc.

**Ginny Swain, Ph.D**

Professor Emeritus, French  
Dartmouth College

### Ex Officio Members

Commissioner  
Maine Department of Labor

Commissioner  
Maine Department of Education



2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR

# HIGHLIGHTS



**27**

**MIDDLE SCHOOL  
PROGRAMS**



**90**

**HIGH SCHOOL  
PROGRAMS**



**10**

**COLLEGE  
CAMPUSES**



**500**

**STATEWIDE  
BUSINESS & EMPLOYER  
PARTNERSHIPS**



**10,000**

**STUDENTS SERVED  
ANNUALLY**





## 2021-2022 Programs

### Middle School Programs

Brewer Community School  
Bucksport Middle School  
China Middle School  
Durham Community School  
Freeport Middle School  
Gardiner Regional Middle School  
James F. Doughty School  
Lewiston Middle School  
Mahoney Middle School  
Memorial Middle School  
Messalonskee Middle School  
Mt. View Middle School  
Nokomis Regional Middle School  
Philip W. Sugg Middle School  
Ridge View Community School  
Rose M. Gaffney Elementary School  
Sanford Jr. High School  
Skowhegan Area Middle School  
Somerset County Middle School Collaborative (Carrabec/Madison)  
Troy Howard Middle School  
Vassalboro Community School  
Warsaw Middle School  
Waterville Jr. High School  
Windham Middle School  
Winslow Junior High School  
Wiscasset Middle/High School

### High School Programs

Bangor High School  
Bangor High School Completion  
Belfast Area High School  
Biddeford High School  
Bonny Eagle High School  
Brewer High School  
Brewer High School MELMAC  
Bucksport High School  
Calais Area High School  
Caribou High School  
Caribou Technology Center  
Carrabec High School  
Cony High School  
Capital Area Technical Center (CATC)  
Deering High School  
Deering High School Completion  
Dexter Regional High School  
Dirigo High School

Edward Little High School  
Edward Little High School Completion  
Ellsworth High School  
Erskine Academy  
Fort Fairfield Middle/High School  
Fort Kent Community High School  
Foxcroft Academy  
Freeport High School  
Gardiner Area High School  
Gorham High School  
Gorham High School  
Hall-Dale High School  
Hampden Academy  
Hodgdon High School  
Houlton High School  
Lawrence High School  
Leavitt Area High School  
Lewiston High School Completion  
Lewiston Regional Tech Center  
Lewiston Regional Tech Center  
Lewiston Regional Tech Center  
Lisbon High School  
Machias Memorial High School  
Madison Area Memorial High School  
Maine Central Institute  
Maranacook Community High School  
Medomak Valley High School  
Messalonskee High School  
Messalonskee High School  
Monmouth Academy  
Morse High School  
Mountain Valley High School  
Mt. Ararat High School  
Mt. Blue High School  
Mt. View High School  
Narraguagus Jr/Sr High School  
Nokomis Regional High School  
Oak Hill High School  
Oceanside High School – East  
Old Town High School  
Old Town High School MELMAC  
Orono High School  
Penquis Valley High School  
Piscataquis Community High School  
Poland Regional High School  
Portland High School  
Portland Area Technical High School (PATHS)  
Presque Isle High School  
Richmond High School  
Sacopee Valley High School  
Sanford High School  
Searsport District Middle School & High School  
Skowhegan Area High School  
Somerset Career & Technical Center  
South Portland High School

South Portland High School  
South Portland High School Completion  
Spruce Mountain High School  
Sumner Memorial High School  
Telstar High School  
Thornton Academy  
Washington Academy  
Waterville High School Completion  
Waterville Senior High School  
Waterville Senior High School  
Westbrook High School  
Windham High School  
Windham High School MELMAC  
Windham High School Completion  
Winslow High School  
Winslow High School MELMAC  
Woodland Jr./Sr. High School

### College Success Program

Central Maine Community College  
Eastern Maine Community College  
Kennebec Valley Community College  
Southern Maine Community College  
Southern Maine Community College  
Thomas College  
Thomas College  
University of Maine - Augusta  
University of Maine – Fort Kent  
University of Maine – Machias  
University of Southern Maine  
Washington County Community College

### Statewide, Regional, and Local Partnerships

Pathway Navigator  
Pathway Navigator (UMA Bangor)  
Pathway Navigator (SMCC)  
Pathway Navigator (Youth Liaison Manager)  
VP, Workforce Development (HAF Career Coordinator)  
Avangrid STEM Pilot Project (Somerset/Franklin)  
OP for Foster Care Youth  
Manager of Strategic Partnerships  
Alfond Youth & Community Center  
Full Plates Full Potential  
Statewide ELO Programming  
Aspire Gorham  
RSU 25 Aspire  
Skowhegan Aspire

## Aspire Initiative

The Aspire Initiative is a partnership among a local school district, JMG and the MELMAC Education Foundation to support all students from early learning through high school graduation and into post-secondary experiences in ways that prepare them to successfully join the workforce.



JMG and the MELMAC Education Foundation partnered with Gorham School District in 2018 and RSU 25 (Bucksport, Orland, Prospect, and Verona Island) in 2020 and are excited to add MSAD 54 (Skowhegan, Canaan, Mercer, Smithfield, Cornville, and Norridgewock) in 2022. This year's highlights include creating a repository of resources shared among the initiatives, videos designed for elementary students that attach businesses and community members to existing curriculum, multiple presentations to internal and external stakeholders to share best practices of community engagement, and shared implementation of "Aspiration timelines" with businesses, school personnel, and students. The Maine Department of Education shared [this Aspirations timeline](#) of Jessica Gerrish, a Bucksport Adult Education student.



## STEM Pilot Project for Franklin & Somerset counties



Maine's STEM Pilot Project provides funding for vocational programs and innovative training programs in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) for students in the Franklin and Somerset Counties' School Districts. This program connects students with career exploration opportunities, paid internships and scholarships for Maine Community Colleges and is serving to advance the State Economic Development Strategy's Career Exploration Program. High quality STEM experiences integrate real-life situations to help students strengthen problem solving and critical thinking skills, collaborate with peers, and increase creativity and innovation. In partnership with schools, businesses, and communities, this project will build upon existing talent in these communities and support innovation to better prepare Maine's students for the 21st century. JMG is acting as the intermediary for this project and highlights thus far include enhancing existing summer programming to connect over 150 students to employers and activities involving STEM careers, developing a streamlined process for educators to access funds for professional development, mini-grants, equipment, and career exploration, and creating a STEM Project newsletter that was disseminated to over 500 school personnel and community members in these counties.



# ELO

*Extended Learning Opportunities*

## Highlights



### OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

The basis of an ELO is that it is a personalized experience that is done in a non-traditional way. Any experience that happens exclusively in a classroom context—while valuable—is not a true ELO.

### CREDIT-BEARING

What sets ELO opportunities apart from traditional enrichment options (clubs, sports, etc.) is that they are designed as credit-bearing options. This requirement is important to increasing equity in our schools.

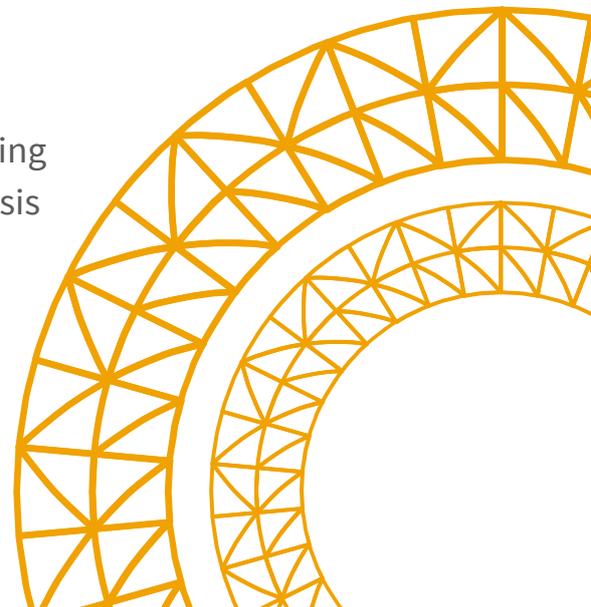
### COMMUNITY-BASED

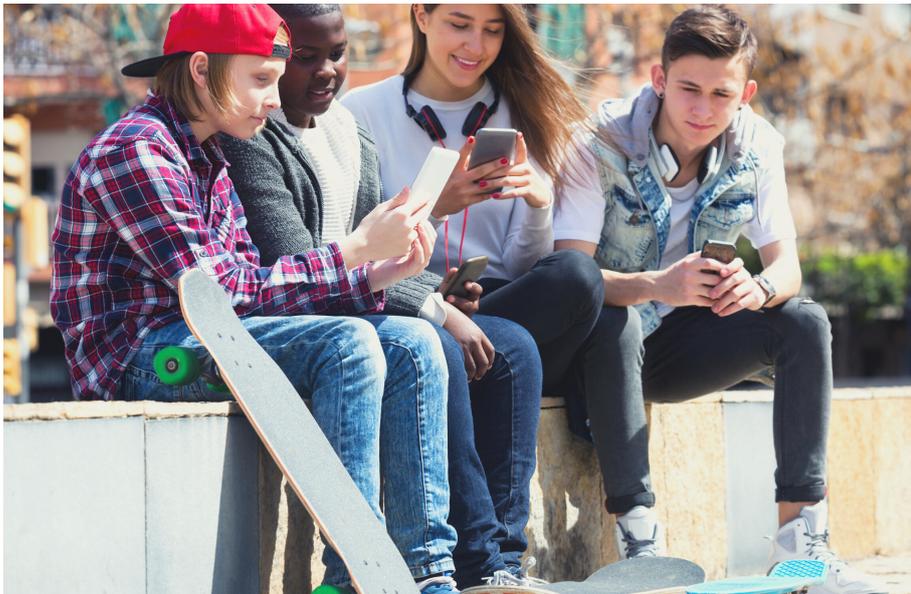
ELOs require the support of local communities and are designed to highlight local expertise, expose students to career options in their communities, and offer real-life application of student learning.

## OVERVIEW

Extended Learning Opportunities are hands-on, credit-bearing courses outside of the traditional classroom with an emphasis on community-based career exploration.

ELOs are designed to be highly personalized opportunities for students to engage in learning in ways that make sense for them and connect their learning to everyday life in relevant and meaningful ways.





## TENETS OF HQ ELO

Extended Learning Opportunities look very different depending on the state, district, school, and student. This reality makes it challenging to clearly articulate the specific parameters of quality ELO experiences.

All quality experiences do, however, include a few key components:

1. Syllabus/goals developed before the start of the ELO.
2. Credit is given. Core credit is encouraged where applicable.
3. Community mentor or partner.
4. Are appropriately rigorous and challenging.
5. Hands-on component.
6. Quality Reflection and Relevancy.
7. Final Product or Presentation.

## EXAMPLES OF HIGH-QUALITY ELO EXPERIENCES

### Career Exploration ELO (elective credit)

In this high-quality ELO experience, the student has chosen to complete a series of online interviews with employees at a specific local business of interest. The student attends an interview once a week and is evaluated on the improvement of their workplace skills (timeliness, communication, etc.). Throughout the experience, the student also completes reflections and academic components. At the conclusion of the course, the student gives a presentation of their learning. This ELO could also be based on in-person job shadows or an internship.

### Environmental Science ELO (science credit)

A student expresses interest in environmental sciences and is interested in exploring a specific aspect of environmental science more closely. This could include interning with the Department of Inland Fisheries, researching ways solar power could be used at the local level, analyzing the impact of browntail moth on tree populations, and more. Regardless of the specific topic, a local expert participates in the ELO and provides feedback to the student.

The student works with a school staff member to articulate specific hands-on requirements as well as design academic (research paper, project proposal, data analysis) and reflection (journals, recordings, papers) components to complement the hands-on learning.

“

*By combining real-world experience with academics, ELOs provide a relevancy to student learning that allows students to envision their future selves, recognize the value of their skills, and take charge of their future.*

Samantha Brink, Director of Statewide ELO Programming, JMG

# WE ARE HERE FOR YOU.



## ELO SUPPORT STRUCTURE

### 1 Coaching Model

Ensuring school districts have access to the necessary human capital support for ELO program development.

### 4 Student Credit Support

Engaging with policy, practices, and opportunities that impact ELOs and credit and providing a structure and system to support students in core and elective credit attainment for ELO opportunities.



### 2 Personnel Training

Building a PD training continuum to support school personnel at all ELO experience levels and a variety of ELO program formats.

### 3 Business Partner Prep

Preparing businesses to engage with ELO programs, and students, safely and effectively.

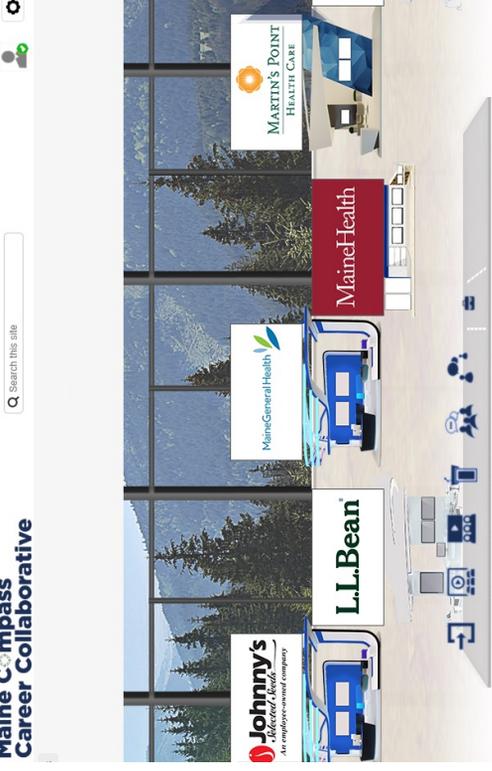
# MaineHealth & JMG

MaineHealth's relationship with JMG started when MaineHealth attended JMG's Career Symposium at Thomas College in the spring of 2019. Shortly after we entered into a 3-year commitment resulting in MaineHealth and JMG having a strong partnership working with youth across the state to offer valuable learning opportunities with healthcare workers, trainings, careers and events.

MaineHealth partners with JMG Specialists to educate youth on a variety of paid training opportunities throughout their health system. These include Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) and Medical Assistant (MA) Trainings, Maine Medical Center School of Surgical Technology and the NorDx Phlebotomy School, among others. In addition, MaineHealth has an employer booth on JMG's Maine Compass Career Collaborative platform, which features information on employment and training opportunities, videos, and much more.

We are continuing this strong partnership with MaineHealth and in addition to current commitments, MaineHealth has engaged JMG in another 3-year commitment to work directly with youth on targeted direct hire programs by agreeing to fund a Workforce Liaison for JMG. This position will work directly with youth, initially seniors in high school and students in participating community college programs. These include Certified Nursing Assistants (CNA), Medical Assistants (MA), and Phlebotomy programs. Our continued shared goals are to expand healthcare awareness of varying roles within healthcare and design innovative workforce development strategies to reach students and identify career pathways.

Maine Compass  
Career Collaborative



Act with  
kindness and  
compassion.

Be an active  
listener.

Be a role  
model.

Set high  
standards.

Take  
responsibility.

Embrace  
change.



# Best Places to Work in ME

**For immediate release**

October 12, 2021

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MESHHRM

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## **“Best Places to Work in Maine” Announces Top Employers in the State**

PORTLAND, Maine (October 12, 2021)—This year’s top winners for all categories in the “Best Places to Work in Maine” program are companies new to the top spot designation.

Dechra, a veterinary pharmaceutical company, took top honors among large companies (250 or more U.S. employees). **JMG (Jobs for Maine Graduates), an Augusta based non-profit, took top honors in the medium employer category (50 to 249 U.S. employees).** NIC Maine (formerly Maine Information Network), attained the top spot among smaller businesses (15-49 U.S. employees).

The “Best Places to Work in Maine” program, in its 16<sup>th</sup> year in Maine, saw the largest number of companies participating with 100 organizations named to the list.

Maine State Council of the Society for Human Resources Management (MESHHRM) made the difficult decision not to host the organizations making the “Best Places to Work in Maine” list in person this year due to COVID-19 numbers and in the interest of public safety.

The “Best Places to Work in Maine” program recognizes companies that have established and consistently fostered outstanding workplace environments. The assessment process, administered by Best Companies Group, evaluated each company’s employee policies and procedures as well as survey responses from the companies’ employees. In August, the Maine Society of Human Resources Management released a list of the 100 companies that made the cut as an overall Best Place to Work.

The “Best Places to Work in Maine” ranked as follows:

**Large Company Category (250+ U.S. Employees)**

- 1 Dechra
- 2 Machias Savings Bank
- 3 Summit Utilities, Inc
- 4 Edward Jones
- 5 MMG Insurance
- 6 Bangor Savings Bank
- 7 The Granite Group
- 8 Darling's
- 9 Consigli Construction Co., Inc
- 10 Kennebec Behavioral Health
- 11 NFI North
- 12 Hancock Lumber
- 13 Hammond Lumber Company
- 14 athenahealth
- 15 The Cianbro Companies
- 16 TD Bank, N.A.
- 17 Androscoggin Home Healthcare and Hospice
- 18 Camden National Bank
- 19 Tyler Technologies
- 20 Cary Medical Center

**Medium Company Category (50 to 249 U.S. Employees)**

- 1 JMG
- 2 Wings for Children and Families
- 3 SHP Management Corporation
- 4 Allagash Brewing Company
- 5 Landry/French Construction
- 6 Colby Co. Engineering
- 7 CCB, Inc.
- 8 DeBlois Electric, Inc.
- 9 VividCloud
- 10 Evergreen Credit Union
- 11 Systems Engineering
- 12 Community Health Options
- 13 Dave's World
- 14 Drummond Woodsum
- 15 RxAnte
- 16 Albin, Randall & Bennett
- 17 Knickerbocker Group
- 18 Infinity Credit Union

- 19 Allen Insurance and Financial
- 20 cPort Credit Union
- 21 Good Shepherd Food Bank of Maine
- 22 Moody's Co-worker Owned, Inc
- 23 James W. Sewall Company
- 24 Downeast Credit Union
- 25 MaineHousing
- 26 PeoplesChoice Credit Union
- 27 Bernstein Shur
- 28 Maine Credit Union League/Synergent
- 29 Bath Savings Institution
- 30 Sebago Technics, Inc
- 31 Finance Authority of Maine
- 32 Trueline
- 33 Mainely Tubs
- 34 Haley Ward, Inc
- 35 Maine State Credit Union
- 36 Katahdin Trust Company
- 37 Midcoast Federal Credit Union
- 38 SeniorsPlus
- 39 The Nonantum Resort
- 40 The County Federal Credit Union
- 41 Horch Roofing
- 42 GreenPages, Inc.
- 43 University Credit Union
- 44 MAS Medical Staffing
- 45 Atlantic Federal Credit Union
- 46 Day's Jewelers
- 47 Volk Packaging Corporation

**Small Company Category (15 to 49 U.S. Employees)**

- 1 NIC Maine
- 2 Acadia Benefits
- 3 Maine Rural Water Association
- 4 iBec Creative
- 5 Saco Valley Credit Union
- 6 Seigney-Lyons Insurance
- 7 Spinnaker Trust
- 8 TruChoice Federal Credit Union
- 9 Maine Dentistry
- 10 Barrett Made
- 11 Planson International
- 12 Onpoint Health Data
- 13 Oxford Federal Credit Union

- 14 Arkatechure
- 15 Lebel & Harriman, LLP
- 16 Chase Custom Homes
- 17 Chilton Furniture
- 18 Trademark Federal Credit Union
- 19 MPX
- 20 Main Eco Homes
- 21 Sweep & Slate
- 22 Nurse Anesthesia of Maine
- 23 Biddeford Internet dba GWI
- 24 Basham & Scott, LLC
- 25 Page One Web Solutions
- 26 Senior Planning Center, Inc
- 27 SFX AMERICA
- 28 Main-Land Development Consultants, Inc.
- 29 Franklin-Somerset Federal Credit Union
- 30 Yokogawa Fluid Imaging Technologies, Inc.
- 31 Maine Mathematics and Science Alliance
- 32 CedarWorks
- 33 Alternative Wellness Services

**Endorsing partners of this program include:** Maine State Chamber of Commerce, Maine HR Convention and *Mainebiz*.

**Sponsors include:** KMA Consulting, Clark Insurance, HUB International, Pro Search, Machias Savings Bank, cPort Credit Union and Sebago Technics

**For more information:** [BestPlacestoWorkInME.com](http://BestPlacestoWorkInME.com).

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# **Best Places to Work in ME**

## Staff survey helps to guide & direct investments

- **Intentionality**

Make intentional investments to balance sustainability and innovation, prioritizing work ethic, talent, and a spirit of “do whatever it takes.”

- **Creativity**

Set into motion new solutions to meet student needs and improve programs, resisting one-size-fits-all approaches. Create the long-term vision collaboratively, incorporating employee expertise and ideas, while consistently considering day-to-day context.

- **Accountability**

All investments are mission driven, and embedded in a steadfast commitment to equity. Specialists lead the frontline to deliver on mission, and must be supported in their efforts to ensure all students have what they need to thrive.



# Best Places to Work in ME

## CORPORATE CULTURE AND COMMUNICATIONS

	YES %	NO %
I can <b>trust</b> what this organization tells me	99 %	1 %
This organization gives me enough recognition for work that is well done	99 %	1 %
Quality is a top priority with this organization	99 %	*Neutral
<b>Safety</b> is a top priority with this organization	100 %	0
My employer enables a culture of diversity	99 %	1 %
This organization makes a strong effort to minimize discrimination	99 %	1 %
I can express my honest opinions without fear of negative consequences	99 %	1 %
Changes that may affect me are communicated prior to implementation	96 %	*Neutral
<b>Corporate Culture and Communications – OVERALL RANKING</b>	<b>99 %</b>	



# Best Places to Work in ME

## RELATIONSHIP WITH SUPERVISOR

	YES%	NO %
My supervisor treats me fairly	99 %	1 %
My supervisor treats me with respect	99 %	*Neutral
My supervisor handles my work-related issues satisfactorily	98 %	1%/*Neutral
My supervisor handles my personal issues satisfactorily	98 %	1%/*Neutral
My supervisor acknowledges when I do my work well	98 %	1%/*Neutral
My supervisor tells me when my work needs improvement	99 %	*Neutral
My supervisor wants me to develop to my fullest potential	99 %	*Neutral
<b>Relationship with Supervisor – OVERALL RANKING</b>	<b>98 %</b>	



## **Best Places to Work in ME**

- Our operations team is second to none - the communication, transparency, leadership and direction that they bring to our company is outstanding. We have great managers that work with small groups of specialists (teachers) and are able to build genuine relationships with us and help us do our jobs to the best of our abilities.
- My manager is someone I feel I can reach out to at any time for any question I might have or support I might need. She really listens to understand and that is something that is so important to this work (this work is emotional as well as results driven).
- During the pandemic, our company went out of their way to support each and every single one of us to make sure we were taken care of. Our supervisors check in on us, not just for work-related reasons, but also to check in on us as a whole. I feel consistently supported and encouraged to try new things within the company. JMG is the most incredible company I've ever had the pleasure of working for.



## **Best Places to Work in ME**

- Authentic transparency from CEO on down, full support of all I do, praise, concern for my professional input, concern for my self care, I am encouraged to use my abilities and continue to grow professionally and personally.
- Excellent workplace culture, excellent training opportunities, and exceptional commitment to providing an inclusive environment.
- JMG is more than a job ... it is an excellent vehicle to help young people of Maine experience options to assist and support career paths.
- Nothing I can think of would make me love this company and career any more than I currently do.
- I hope JMG continues doing what it has been doing: open dialogue, transparency, rewarding excellence, laughter and comradery at meetings, promoting from within, collaborate and celebrate with internal and external stakeholders, believing we are all doing our best encourages us to achieve our best.



# Outcomes & Research



# MEMO

## SUMMARY OF LATEST JMG OUTCOMES AND RESEARCH

TO: KIM LIPP, EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT, JMG  
FROM: MICHAEL LEVERT, STEPWISE DATA RESEARCH  
DATE: APRIL 19, 2021

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This memo briefly summarizes the latest outcomes and research findings for youth enrolled in JMG programs, with an emphasis on JMG youth who are economically disadvantaged.

- ⇒ **About 70% of youth enrolled in JMG today come from economically disadvantaged families.**<sup>i</sup> These students differ from their peers in several important ways: they are more likely to have parents who did not attend college; to have a record of excessive school absences; to have low academic performance; and to lack family support for their education.<sup>ii</sup>
- ⇒ **Despite these barriers, JMG economically disadvantaged youth are graduating high school at high rates.** JMG's high school graduation rate for students who took JMG at any time in high school is 92%. For economically disadvantaged youth who took JMG in their senior year, 96% graduated. (For reference, the state's 4-year graduation rate is 87.4% for all students and 78.9% for economically disadvantaged youth.)<sup>iii</sup>
- ⇒ **A rigorous and peer-reviewed longitudinal evaluation of 27,000 Maine high school students found a significant "JMG effect" on graduation rates.** American Institute for Research (AIR), a global research firm based in Washington, D.C. AIR found that high school graduation rates increased for students taking JMG anytime in high school by 8 percentage points for all students; by 15 points for economically disadvantaged students; and by 12 points for students with disabilities.<sup>iv</sup> For economically disadvantaged youth who took JMG as juniors or seniors, their likelihood of dropping out was reduced by 4 percentage points.<sup>v</sup> The study was based on students who first enrolled in high school between 2004-14.
- ⇒ **Two recent research studies also found a "JMG effect" on wage growth after high school.** Stepwise Data Research, an economic research firm in Yarmouth, Maine, in partnership with the Maine Department of Labor, found that JMG graduates experienced significant, consistent, and sustained wage increases after high school: for the JMG classes of 2009 and 2010, average annual wages increased over 18%, or \$2,300 dollars per year – more than 10 times the rate of inflation.<sup>vi</sup> AIR also found that 53% of students with disabilities who took JMG in high school were employed at age 19 compared to 43% of similar non-JMG students. The JMG group had average weekly earnings 50% higher than the non-JMG group.<sup>vii</sup>
- ⇒ **70% of JMG college success students who began college in 2014 or later are persisting to their second year.**<sup>viii</sup> While this research did report economically disadvantaged students separately, it compares favorably with the statewide 53% persistence rate for economically disadvantaged students in 2018 (latest data available) and statewide persistence rates between 67-77% for all students for 2014-18.<sup>ix</sup> Of all JMG college success students who began college in 2014 or later, today 59% are still in school or have attained a credential. Of those who withdrew from school without a credential, 60% are still in the JMG pathway navigation program.

## ENDNOTES

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- <sup>i</sup> Stepwise Data Research based on Endms data; analyzed 4/16/2021.
- <sup>ii</sup> Stepwise Data Research based on Endms data for the class of 2019-20.
- <sup>iii</sup> Maine Department of Education, Data Warehouse.
- <sup>iv</sup> Michelle Lu Yin et al, Crossing the Finish Line, and Beyond: Impact of Jobs for Maine's Graduates on High School Outcomes, working paper, 11/19/19.
- <sup>v</sup> American Institutes for Research, Impact of Jobs for Maine's Graduates on Student Schooling and Employment Outcomes, reference guide, 4/12/21.
- <sup>vi</sup> Stepwise Data Research in partnership with the Maine Department of Labor; findings based on wage records within the Unemployment Insurance database.
- <sup>vii</sup> American Institutes for Research, Impact of Jobs for Maine's Graduates on Student Schooling and Employment Outcomes, reference guide, 4/12/21.
- <sup>viii</sup> College Success Salesforce database; analyzed 4/16/2021.
- <sup>ix</sup> Common Data Project; accessed here: [https://www.maine.gov/doe/sites/maine.gov.doe/files/inline-files/2020%20Common%20Data%20Project%20Annual%20Report\\_Dec%202020.pdf](https://www.maine.gov/doe/sites/maine.gov.doe/files/inline-files/2020%20Common%20Data%20Project%20Annual%20Report_Dec%202020.pdf).

## Summer 2020-21 Outcomes Data and Highlights

10/29/2021

### Summer to Fall, All Tier 1 Students Highlights:

- 51% of rostered students (not including bridging) achieved a Positive-in School outcome, defined as either in school, returned to school, or attained a credential
  - This includes an overall retention rate of 85% (300) for campus based programming
  - 12 (1%) students attained a COV
    - 4 students earned a work related credential
    - 4 students earned associates degrees
    - 4 students earned Bachelor's degrees
  
- 42 (5%) of the students were referred to PN services following the summer semester.

### Summer-to-Fall Pathway Navigation Program Highlights

- 20% of the students achieved a positive-in School Outcome, defined as either attained, persisted, or returned to school
- 5 of these students earned a COV
- 28 students (7%) returned to school or some type of COV training
- 44 (13%) of the students were exited from the program
- 56 (15%) students were identified to receive Tier 2 level of services for the Fall 2021 semester

Summer-to-Fall, All Tier 1 Students			Summer-to-Fall, Pathway Navigation Program		
Outcome	Percent	Count	Outcome	Percent	Count
<b>Positive - In School</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>394</b>	<b>Positive - In School</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>77</b>
Attained	1%	12	Attained	1%	5
Retained	38%	300	Retained	n/a	n/a
Persisted/Attained +	7%	54	Persisted/Attained +	11%	44
Returned to school	4%	28	Returned to school	7%	28
<b>Positive - Supported</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>395</b>	<b>Positive - Supported</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>321</b>
Referred to PN	5%	43	Referred to PN	n/a	n/a
Continue PN	28%	219	Continue PN	55%	219
PN Tier 2	8%	60	PN Tier 2	15%	60
Exited/UC	9%	73	Exited/UC	10%	42
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>789</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>398</b>

## Summer 2020-21 Outcomes Data and Highlights

10/29/2021

### All outcomes, (except current 2021-22 cohort) since 2015 Highlights:

- 57% of all rostered students achieved a Positive-in School status, defined as either attained, retained, or persisted
  - 298 (28%) rostered students have attained a COV
- 229 (18%) students have been exited from the program due to prolonged UC/disengaged status, Opt out, or aged out

<b>All outcomes, Summer (except current 2021-22 cohort)</b>		
<b>Positive - In School</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>751</b>
Attained	28%	376
Retained	24%	299
Persisted	3%	43
Returned to School	2%	33
<b>Positive - Supported</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>565</b>
PN - Active	19%	258
PN - Tier 2	3%	40
Exited/UC	11%	267
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1323</b>

### 2020-21 Cohort First year Retention Outcomes:

<b>Positive - In School</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>152</b>
Attained	5%	12
Retained	46%	116
Persisted	5%	12
Returned to School	4%	11
<b>Positive - Supported</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>99</b>
PN - Active	26%	65
PN - Tier 2		2
Exited/UC	13%	32
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>251</b>

**Summer 2020-21 Outcomes Data and Highlights**  
**10/29/2021**

**2020-21 First year Retention rate by campus:**

	Attained		Retained		Persisted		Returned to School				
		Record Count		Record Count		Record Count		Record Count			
CMCC	8%	3	39%	15	0%	0	11%	4	58%	22	38
EMCC	0%	0	39%	9	0%	0	9%	2	48%	11	23
KVCC	20%	5	20%	5	4%	1	0%	0	48%	12	25
SMCC	0%	0	40%	14	6%	2	6%	2	48%	18	35
Thomas College	0%	0	60%	21	9%	3	6%	2	74%	26	35
UMA - Augusta	0%	0	47%	7	0%	0	0%	0	47%	7	15
UMA - Bangor Campus	0%	0	70%	7	10%	1	10%	1	90%	9	10
UMFK	0%	0	67%	4	0%	0	0%	0	67%	4	6
UMM	13%	2	40%	6	13%	2	0%	0	67%	10	15
USM	0%	0	52%	13	12%	3	0%	0	64%	16	25
WCCC	9%	2	65%	15	0%	0	0%	0	74%	17	23
<b>Total</b>		<b>12</b>		<b>116</b>		<b>12</b>		<b>11</b>		<b>152</b>	<b>251</b>



# Impact of Jobs for Maine's Graduates on Student Schooling and Employment Outcomes

# What is JMG?

Founded in 1993, Jobs for Maine's Graduates (JMG) is a year-round program that partners with public schools to offer for-credit courses which aim to improve high school graduation and put middle and high school students on a college or career path. JMG is a state-affiliate of the Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) network and is geared towards students who are facing multiple barriers to high school completion and focuses on those who are falling behind grade level, or who show other signs of academic challenges or disengagement in school.

Serving more than 9,000 students in Maine's public schools, JMG offers a competency-based curriculum and a continuum of support to help students transition from high school to post-secondary education, degree attainment, or career pathways.

As of the 2018-19 school year, JMG served

more than **9,000** students

**131** programs

College Success

12

12

Local, Regional, and Statewide

High School

84

23

Middle School

serving more than **5,600** high school students



serving more than **2,300** middle school students

**45-55** students per school in a mixed-grade class setting



**35-45** students per school

**10-15** students per class



**8-12** students per class

## JMG Specialists

**Each JMG class is taught by an on-site, full-time JMG specialist. JMG specialists assess each student's needs every semester.** The program focuses on students who are falling behind grade level or who experience other kinds of academic or non-academic barriers, including environmental, work-related, physical, or psychological barriers, to be successfully engaged in high school. Each JMG class is taught by an on-site, full-time JMG specialist, and follows a curriculum designed around competencies related to career development, life/community living skills, social skills, and career-based learning.

In addition to regular activities conducted over the school year, JMG specialists continue to provide support and guidance to students for a minimum of one year after high school graduation, and for those continuing into post-secondary pathways the support continues through degree or credential attainment up until the age of 24. The activities of JMG specialists are closely monitored by JMG regional managers, many of whom emphasize an “outcomes-based” approach, where the main aim is to produce positive outcomes for students coming out of JMG.

## Key Activities

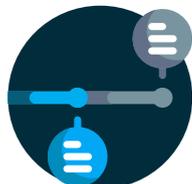
*The JMG model service competencies are a list of strategies followed by JMG specialists that include:*



Developing and implementing a personal development plan for career development



Creating and selecting an immediate job goal and developing a career path for a selected occupation



Setting and prioritizing goals and establishing a timeline for achieving them



Strategies to address students' academic, work-related, and social emotional needs.

*JMG also performs collaborations within the JMG system and other external agencies which include:*



JMG-hosted events that may include summer retreat or workshops



Linking students to employers and business communities



Working with the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors in the JMG schools.

**A student-centered approach that focuses on**

- Participation in vocational education classes and community work during the last two years of high school

- Participation in community-living, personal-social, vocational, and self-determination skills

- Participation in transitional planning during high school

# Maine Transition Work-Based Learning Model Demonstration

## What is This Project About?

Maine Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) is working together with Jobs for Maine's Graduates (JMG), the Institute for Community Inclusion at the University of Massachusetts Boston (ICI), American Institutes for Research (AIR), and the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) on the Transition Work-Based Learning (TWBL) Model Demonstration project. This project includes research about programs to help youth with disabilities successfully complete high school and find jobs or enter college on a career path.

Jobs for Maine's Graduates (JMG) is one of two interventions being studied under this project.



## Evaluation of JMG

Successful dropout prevention interventions typically have multiple features, such as



providing adult advocates to students at risk,



implementing programs to improve students' classroom behavior and social skills,



arranging personalized learning environments and individualized instruction, and



providing rigorous and relevant instruction with a focus on improving the classroom climate and students' engagement, academic performance, and attendance (Freeman & Simonsen, 2015).

*This project evaluates the impact of JMG participation on high school completion for students with disabilities, and for students with non-disability related barriers. In addition, specifically among students with disabilities who also go on to receive Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services, we study the employment and earnings paths for those who received JMG in school versus those who didn't.*

While dropout prevention programs aimed at students at risk are widely implemented by schools and school districts, these programs are rarely evaluated on students with disabilities. The JAG curriculum shares some common features with other dropout prevention programs, while the JMG program follows a similar model of engagement by identifying and serving students who face barriers to completing high school, and mentoring students to keep them engaged in school.

### JMG Evaluation under Maine TWBL Demonstration Grant

What is the impact of JMG on high school completion and employment outcomes?

# JMG and Schooling Outcomes

## JMG Impact on Students with Disabilities

### Study: Improving Schooling Outcomes for Students with Disabilities

*Using instrumental variable design, we estimate the impact of JMG participation on high school completion for students with disabilities.*

Our estimates suggest that participating in JMG at any point during high school **increased the likelihood of high school graduation by 20 to 24 percentage points** and lowered the likelihood of dropout by **20 to 23 percentage points** for students with disabilities in Maine.

*Although we did not have information on students' academic performance at the beginning of high school, we did observe 11th-grade test scores for students enrolled after the 2012–13 school year. Among these students, JMG students had significantly lower test scores in mathematics, science, and English language arts, on average, suggesting that JMG students were more likely to face academic barriers to high school completion.*

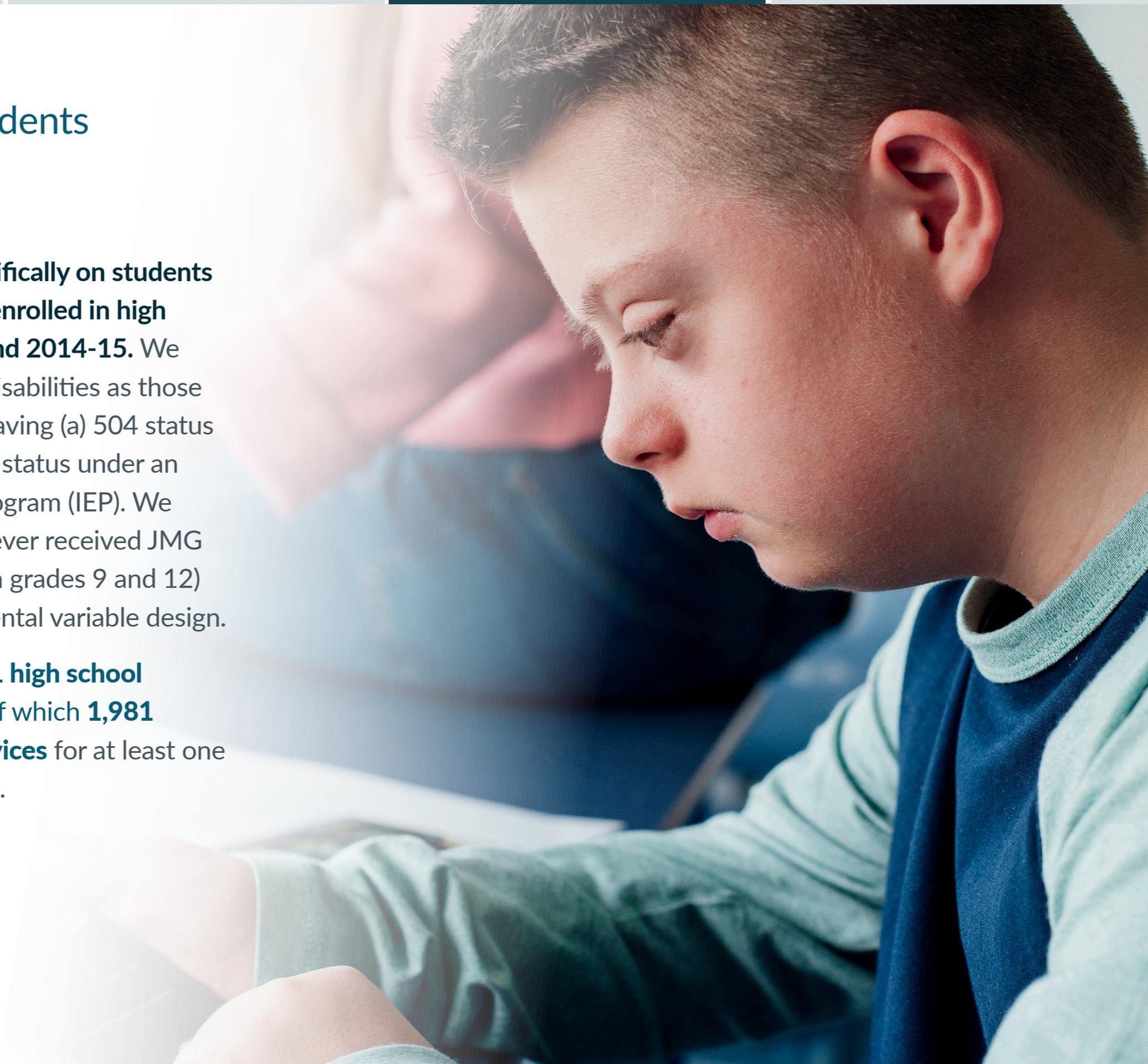
**Despite these lower academic scores, JMG students with disabilities had much higher graduation rates (79%), compared with non-JMG students with disabilities (69%).**



## JMG Impact on Students with Disabilities

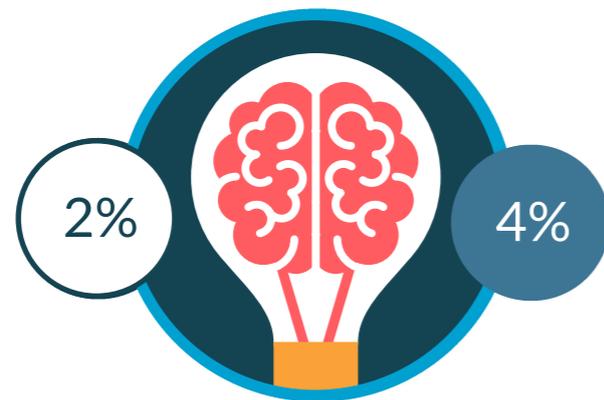
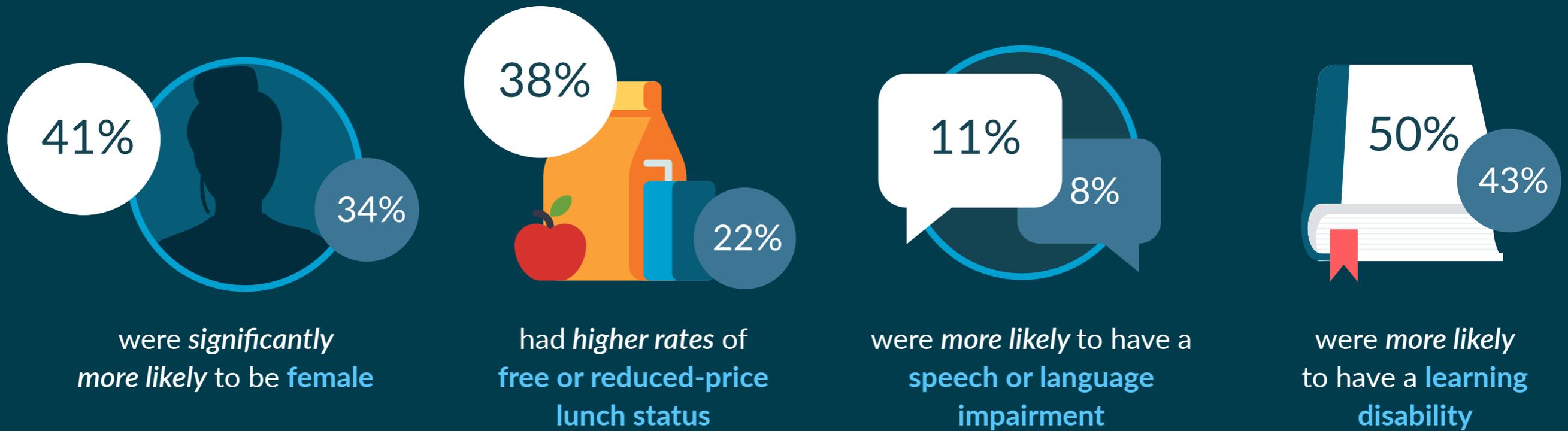
In this study, we focus specifically on students with disabilities who were enrolled in high school between 2004-05 and 2014-15. We categorized students with disabilities as those who were ever marked as having (a) 504 status and/or (b) special education status under an Individualized Education Program (IEP). We study the impact of having ever received JMG during high school (between grades 9 and 12) by using a rigorous instrumental variable design.

Our sample included **35,861 high school students with disabilities**, of which **1,981 students received JMG services** for at least one semester during high school.

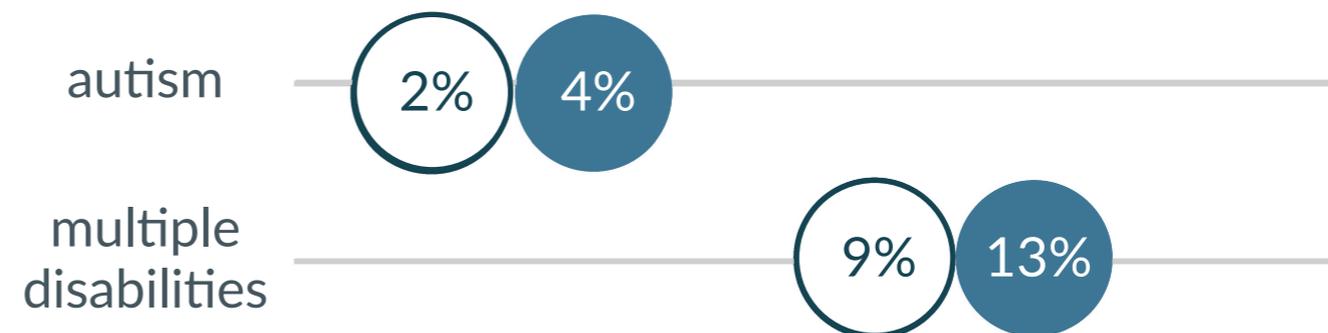


# JMG Students with Disabilities

■ JMG ■ NON-JMG



were *less likely* to have intellectual disabilities



## JMG Impact on All Students

### Crossing the Finish Line and Beyond: *Impact of Jobs for Maine's Graduates on High School Graduation and Dropout*

Using rigorous matching techniques, we found that participating in JMG during the last two years of high school (in grades 11 or 12) increased the likelihood of graduation and reduced the likelihood of dropout for students with barriers to high school completion – including student with disabilities, those with a free or reduced-price lunch status, and those with Limited English Proficiency.



**Specifically, among students with a free or reduced-price lunch status,** JMG participation during last two years of high school improved the likelihood of graduation by 5 percentage points and reduced the likelihood of dropping out by almost 4 percentage points.



**Among LEP students,** JMG participation during last two years of high school improved the likelihood of high school graduation by almost 17 percentage points, and reduced the likelihood of dropout by almost 6 percentage points.



**For students with disabilities,** JMG improved the likelihood of graduation by 11 percentage points and reduced the likelihood of dropout by 7 percentage points.

## JMG Impact on All Students

This study evaluates the impact of JMG in the final two years of high school on graduation and dropout for students enrolled in JMG schools in Maine between 2005 and 2016.

The sample includes:



49%

students with a **free or reduced-price lunch status**



4%

students with **Limited English Proficiency (LEP)**



22%

students with **disabilities**

# JMG and Labor Market Outcomes

*Within a sample of youth with disabilities who were eligible for VR services between 2005 and 2016, this study looks at the difference in employment trajectories of transition-age youth who received JMG in school and those who didn't.*

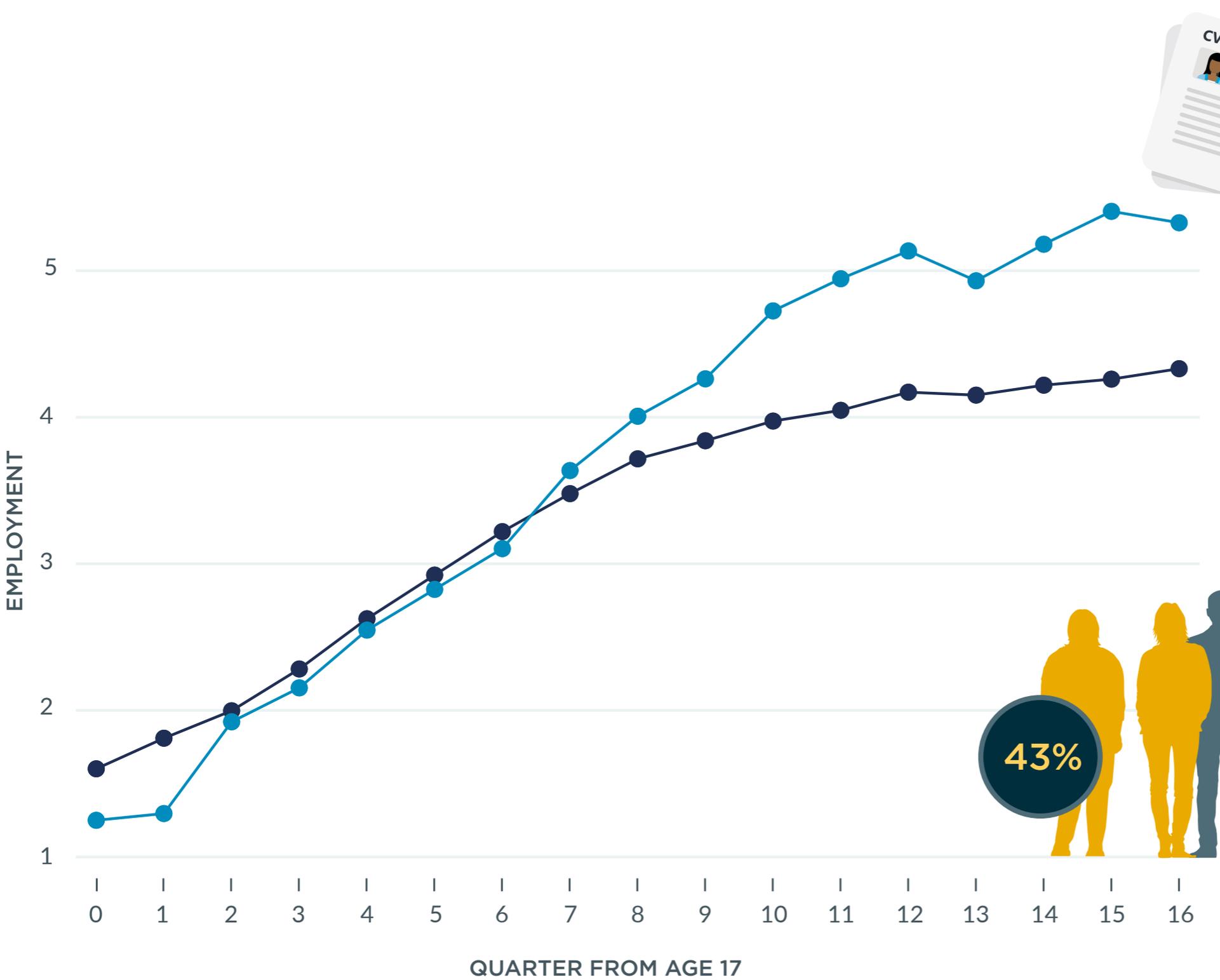
The sample includes 7,347 VR-eligible youth who applied for VR between ages 17 and 20, almost 6% of whom (n=431) participated in JMG during high school. The study analyzes post-age 17 employment and earnings trends for those who received JMG during high school and those who did not.



# Employment Trend Trajectories

■ JMG ■ NON-JMG

FIG. 1 EMPLOYMENT



As shown in Figure 1, JMG VR youth start out at similar employment levels as non-JMG VR youth, but **after six quarters, or after age 18, their employment starts increasing at a steeper rate than non-JMG VR youth.**

By age 19, almost **53% of JMG youth were employed, compared to 43% of non-JMG VR youth.**

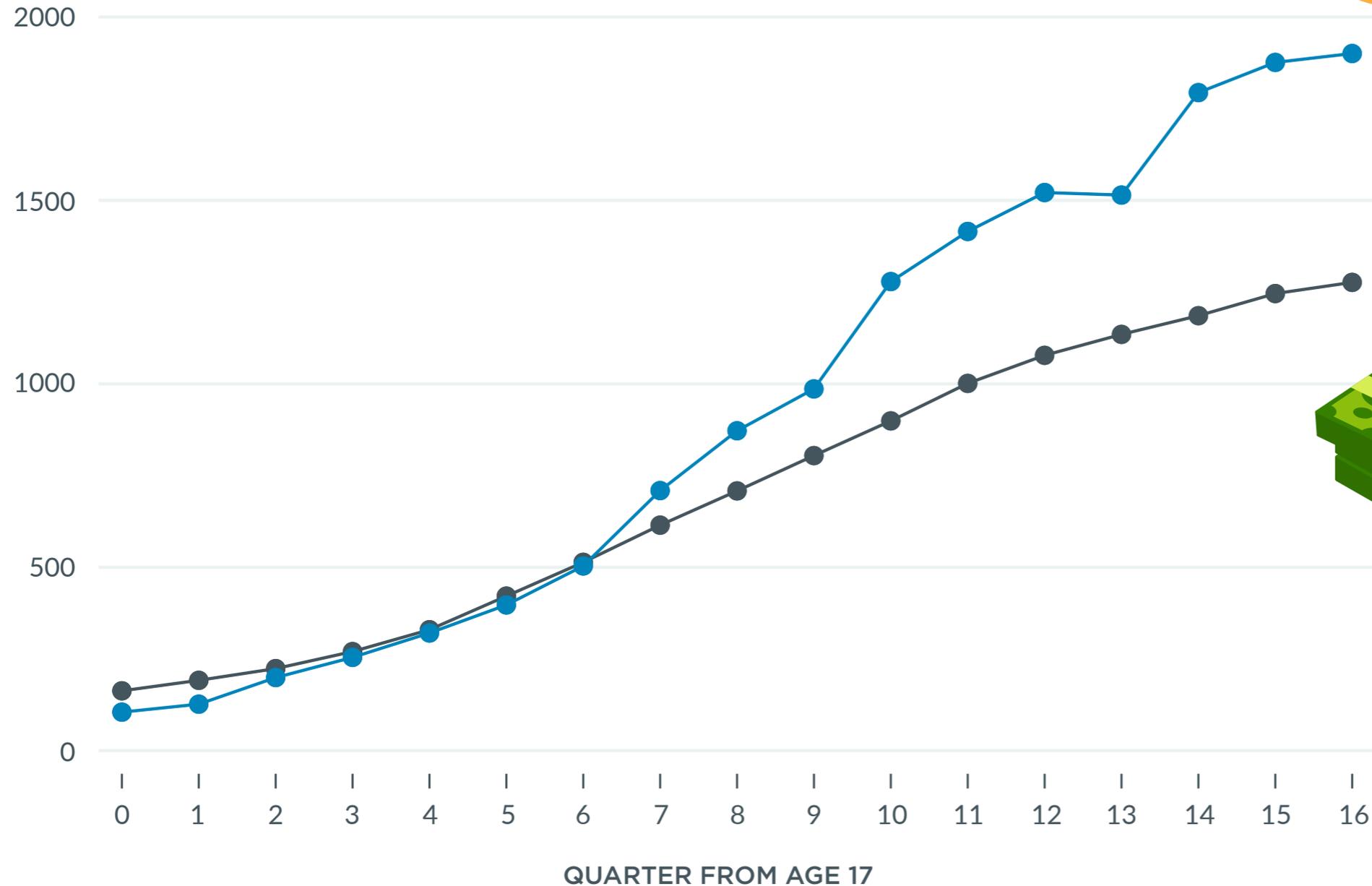


# Earning Trend Trajectories

FIG. 2 EARNINGS

■ JMG ■ NON-JMG

EARNINGS



Similarly, as shown in Figure 2, JMG VR youth start out at similar earnings levels as non-JMG VR youth, but **after six quarters, or after age 18, their earnings start increasing at a steeper rate than non-JMG VR youth.**

Average quarterly earnings of JMG VR youth were an average of \$1,904 by age 19, compared to \$1,277 for non-JMG VR youth.

For more information about this project,  
contact Garima Siwach ([gsiwach@air.org](mailto:gsiwach@air.org)) or  
Deeza-Mae Smith ([dmsmith@air.org](mailto:dmsmith@air.org)).



BUDGET & FUNDING  
SOURCES





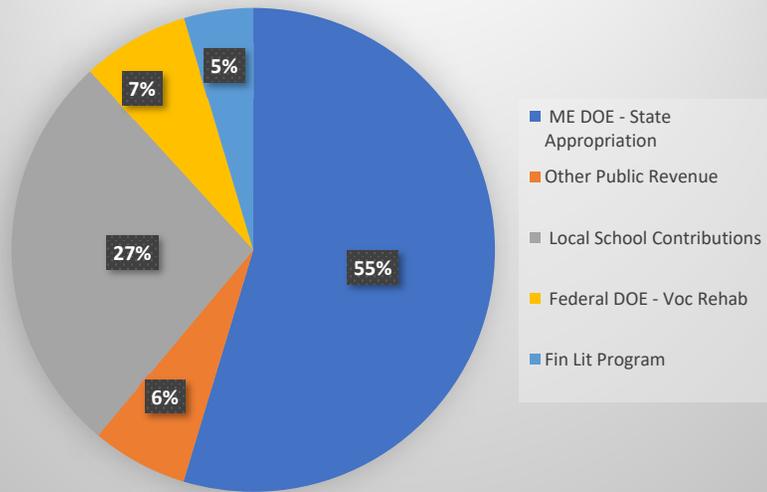
<b>JMG Operating Budget- FY22 (July 1, 2021- June 30, 2022)</b>		<b>Amount</b>
<b>REVENUE</b>		
	ME DOE - State Appropriation	3,545,379
	ME DHHS	4,989,333
	Federal DOE - Voc Rehab	115,203
	Local School Contributions	2,060,000
	Private Development (Grants, Sponsorship, Individuals)	1,569,788
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>		<b>12,279,702</b>
<b>EXPENSE</b>		
<b>Personnel</b>		
	Salaries	8,420,566
	Benefits and Fringe	2,015,559
<b>Subtotal Personnel</b>		<b>10,436,125</b>
<b>Operational Expenses</b>		
	Administration and Fees	101,056
	Facilities	98,916
	Communications and Employer Engagement	51,590
	Staff Training and Development	164,365
	Student Events and Activities	156,895
	Student Support	402,750
	Supplies	58,150
	Technology & Equipment	183,748
	Travel Expenses	109,107
	Partner Expenses	517,000
<b>Subtotal Operational Expenses</b>		<b>1,843,577</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSE</b>		<b>12,279,702</b>
<b>NET REVENUE</b>		<b>-</b>



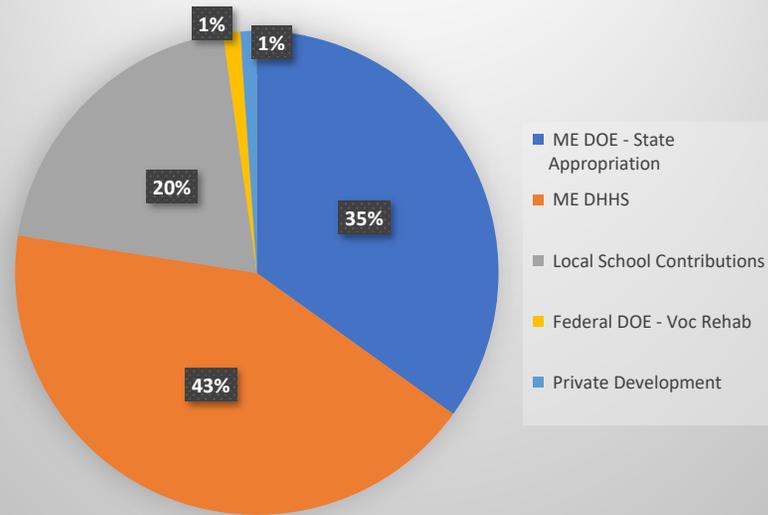
# ME DOE Revenue Since 2018

While we have added an additional 31 HS and MS programs since 2018, the share of support from the state appropriation to fund our HS and MS programs has decreased from 55% to 35% over that time frame.

**2018 HS & MS Revenue Sources**  
**\$6,486,483**



**2022 HS & MS Revenue Sources**  
**\$10,155,914**





# STRATEGIC PLAN





# 2020-2025 STRATEGIC PLAN



**JMG’s 2020 – 2025 Strategic Plan**  
 July 1, 2020 (FY21) – June 30, 2025 (FY25)  
 Approved by JMG’s Board of Directors on June 17, 2020

**JMG’s Mission Statement:** JMG’s mission is to identify students who face barriers to education, and to guide each one on to a successful path toward continued education, a meaningful career, and productive adulthood.

**JMG’s Vision Statement:** Our vision is to be a champion for all Maine students facing barriers to education. We understand Maine’s future will be a reflection of what we commit and contribute to our youth.

While it took 25 years to serve our first 50,000 students, JMG is projected to serve more than 55,000 students within the next five years. As we look ahead to 2025, it is important to reflect upon our most recent history, and the significant growth achieved within the timeframe of our previous strategic plan.

<b>JMG Budget and Programmatic Outcomes Achieved from FY 2015 – FY 2020</b>			
FY 2015		FY 2020	
Total Programs	79	Total Programs	143
Total Students Served	4,650	Total Students Served	11,000
Total Annual JMG Budget	\$6,987,579	Total Annual JMG Budget	\$12,341,096
Total State Appropriation	\$2,345,379	Total State Appropriation	\$ 3,545,379
Total DHHS Contract	\$ 180,000	Total DHHS Contract	\$ 4,661,233
Total Endowment	\$ 600,000	Total Endowment	\$ 4,591,935

**In envisioning the future, because of JMG’s expanded student reach and programmatic scaffolding, we must recognize our organization is a pivotal agent of positive change for Maine’s education and workforce development systems.** This capacity comes with extraordinary responsibility to support Maine students and the Maine economy in increasingly critical ways. Recent, and ongoing, independent research by Stepwise Data Research and the American Institute of Research is proving JMG’s strategies of student-centered education, and results-driven career readiness, are effective even for students who face the highest barriers, including economically disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, and youth-in-foster-care.

As we enter into this next phase, JMG stands poised to achieve the highest level of national standards set by Jobs for America's Graduates for the 25<sup>th</sup> consecutive year. And while we believe it is important to secure that status, we choose not rest on our laurels. This new strategic plan sets a vision for improved, more significant programmatic outcomes that take our expectations for student success well beyond high school graduation.

We have set an aggressive agenda, focusing on making critical investments in our staff, sustaining the tremendous growth of our organization, and driving forward an intentional and comprehensive redesign of JMG's programmatic blueprint. We will take bold steps to ensure the JMG model remains cutting edge in terms of education and economic relevance – always keeping the success of our students at the center of our efforts and commitment.

The three key strategic priorities for this new plan include:

- 1. Seize JMG's unique position and expertise to deepen the connection between education and workforce development to reinforce and advance a system of post-secondary and career readiness that equally values knowledge and competencies, spanning the full range of essential skills that best serve and prepare students for success beyond high school.**
- 2. Invest deeply in organizational development to support and honor the dedication of our Specialists, strengthening the internal capacity needed to deliver most effectively on mission, while upholding a positive culture based on shared values.**
- 3. Sustain and maximize a diversification of revenue resources.**

In developing this strategic plan – which included an 18-month multi-layered process – the most noteworthy asset cited universally by both internal and, notably, external stakeholders is the strength of JMG's organizational culture. Importantly, the strength of JMG's relationship-based approach and shared values will not only carry forward the ambitious goals of this plan, it is what sets us apart in a vast landscape of measures of success in education and workforce metrics.

At the core of JMG's accountability, our top priority, is to build our strategies and practices with an emphasis on connections and relationships. We hold and lift up the broader perspective of employee and student well-being, helping individuals realize their fullest potential, and investing in the development of talent.

As JMG's Board of Directors and executive team continue to lead and advance a highly effective and accountable organization, we are committed to supporting a culture of trust, risk taking, and innovation that honors an inclusive and transparent decision making process so that all stakeholders are pulling in the same direction on behalf of Maine students.

**JMG's 2020-2025 Strategic Plan**  
**Key Priorities and Objectives**

- 1. Seize JMG's unique position and expertise to deepen the connection between education and workforce development to reinforce and advance a system of post-secondary and career readiness that equally values knowledge and competencies, spanning the full range of essential skills that best serve and prepare students for success beyond high school.**
  - a. Recognize the significance of JMG's relevancy for the future of Maine, given the scale and reach of programs delivered in partnership with Maine's K-12 public education system, the private business sector, and higher education institutions.
  - b. Align JMG's key performance indicators to the credential-attainment goals articulated recently by education and economic leaders in Maine. JMG is supporting the state's goal, codified by statute, that 60% of Mainers will attain a degree or industry-recognized post-secondary credential.
  - c. Evaluate, through third-party independent research, JMG's student-centered practices and results-driven learning strategies to advance a framework for post-secondary and career readiness that sets standards for what students should know and be able to do.
  
- 2. Invest deeply in organizational development to support and honor the dedication of our Specialists, strengthening the internal capacity needed to deliver most effectively on mission, while upholding a positive culture based on shared values.**
  - a. Embrace the significant growth JMG has achieved in the past five years, and take the time and effort needed to reinforce organizational excellence.
  - b. Achieve programmatic excellence by solidifying best-in-class practices for new models launched in the past five years; and, continue to develop forward-thinking and innovative approaches.
  - c. Advance systems and tools to better support employees and strengthen the position of the organization.
  
- 3. Sustain and maximize a diversification of revenue resources.**
  - a. Solidify a stronger fiscal position, leveraging the expertise of the ad-hoc Investment Advisory Committee to fully leverage an endowment, maximize additional assets, and achieve stellar stewardship of current and future investors.
  - b. Promote JMG as a valued partner of Maine's Departments of Health and Human Services, Education, Labor, Economic and Community Development, the Office of Innovation and the Future, and the state's community college and university systems.
  - c. Continue to advance affiliate business structure.



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## JMG Strategic Plan Process

During a period of 18 months, JMG’s Board of Directors and executive team led a strategic planning process through board work sessions, structured feedback opportunities with JMG’s operations team and Specialists, and engagement with stakeholders to provide a comprehensive analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats against an environmental scan of trends and issues within education, workforce development, and nonprofit business sectors. And, as a student-centered organization, JMG continuously solicits feedback from enrolled students and alumni and did so in several different formats for this plan.

Key Audience	Date	Participants	Action sought	Format
External Stakeholders	2018	Business leaders, state government leaders, community members, stakeholders	CEO and EVP present to stakeholders at statewide springboard meetings. Feedback captured	Meetings and Surveys
2020 Vision Task Force	2018-2019	Executive Team, Regional Managers, Field Staff	Reading assignments, educational exercises, and meetings to review priorities, progress, and influences	Meetings and Exercises
External Stakeholders	May 2018	Business leaders, state government leaders, community members, stakeholders	CEO presents to stakeholders at Portland Chamber of Commerce: Eggs & Issues and Bank of America employee event. Feedback captured	Meetings
All Staff	Aug 2018	All staff	CEO and EVP captures staff feedback at Workforce Development Summit	Meeting
Board of Directors	Sep 2018	Full board	Leadership consultant, Jim Mahan reviews influencing change process, sets stage for Dec board meeting, strategic planning process defined	Full Board Meeting
JMG Students	Oct 2018	All 2018-2019 JMG student leaders	Leadership Education Conference: activity to capture student voice	Leadership Education Conference
Board of Directors	Dec 2018	Full Board and Executive Team	Strategic Plan Work Session: focus on workforce development and employer engagement	Full Board Meeting
External Stakeholders	Mar 2019	Legislators, School Partners, Key Supporters, Staff, Students	Feedback on research data and serving student populations with intent	Statehouse Hall of Flags
Board of Directors	Mar 2019	Full Board Student Voice	Strategic Plan Work Session: strategic plan priorities and objectives - Student presentation	Full Board Meeting
Legislative Committees	Jan – Jun 2019	DOE, DHHS, IDEA, DOL, and Approps	Presentation and feedback from committee members	Various

Key Audience	Date	Participants	Action sought	Format
Board of Directors	Jun 2019	Full Board	Fund consolidation to launch financial strategies (strategic growth, health care reserve, endowment). Investment in staff: base pay increase and bonus pool structure	Full Board Meeting
Exec Council, then All Staff	Jun 2019	Exec Council	Presentation and feedback on total compensation strategy	Meeting
All Staff	Aug 2019	All Staff	Presentation and feedback of company growth and vision	Workforce Development Summit
Board of Directors	Sep 2019	Full Board	Presentation and feedback of company growth and vision	Full Board Meeting
Governor	Oct 2019	Governor and cabinet members	Presentation of JMG's past and future story/initiatives/impact	Guidepost Letter
Board of Directors	Dec 2019	Full Board Student Voice Office of Policy Innovation & Future	Strategic Plan Work Session: strategic plan priorities and objectives; student presentation; presentation by Hannah Pingree and Maria Povec	Full Board Meeting
All Staff	Spring 2020	All Staff	Presentation and feedback on strategic plan priorities and objectives	Statewide Listening Dinners
Board of Directors	Mar 2020	Full Board, Executive Team, Ops Team	Strategic Plan Work Session: feedback and responses to draft plan	Full Board Meeting
Board of Directors	Jun 2020	Full Board	Vote on final strategic plan	Full Board Meeting
All Staff	Jun 2020	All Staff	Presentation of final strategic plan	Statewide Meeting

**Internal Stakeholders:**

Board of Directors: Includes all GenME, GenUS, and JMG Board members.

Executive Team: Includes all GenME and JMG executives. Meet bi-weekly.

Regional Managers: Includes ten managers, representing various regions of the state (south, central, north).

Ops Team: Includes regional managers, director of operations, asst. director of operations and vice president of human resources. Meet once-twice per month.

Executive Council: A council consisting of eight master specialists and two non-master specialists who meet several times a year with members of the executive team to discuss important, big picture issues like the state of the company, the direction in which we are headed and plans for the future. Meet 3 to 4 times a year.

2020 Vision Task Force: Includes 26 staff members including executive team, operations team, and field staff. Group has been identified as key behavioral influencers, who attend facilitated meetings to shape and influence change. Group is assigned reading and educational exercises to support role.

## Strategic Priorities: 2020-2025

- 1. Seize JMG's unique position and expertise to deepen the connection between education and workforce development to reinforce and advance a system of post-secondary and career readiness that equally values knowledge and competencies, spanning the full range of essential skills that best serve and prepare students for success beyond high school.**

Our objectives include the following:

- a. Recognize the significance of JMG's relevancy for the future of Maine, given the scale and reach of programs delivered in partnership with Maine's K-12 public education system, the private business sector, and higher education institutions.
- b. Align JMG's key performance indicators to the credential-attainment goals articulated recently by education and economic leaders in Maine. JMG is supporting the state's goal, codified by statute, that 60% of Mainers will attain a degree or industry-recognized post-secondary credential.
- c. Evaluate, through third-party independent research, JMG's student-centered practices and results-driven learning strategies to advance a framework for post-secondary and career readiness that sets standards for what students should know and be able to do.

What this means: *As workforce development becomes even more crucial to the Maine economy, JMG recognizes the essential role we play in reaching more than 10,000 members of the future workforce on an annual basis. This formalizes JMG's relationship-based continuum of support focused on student engagement through career preparation pathways in partnership with public education, the business community, and higher education institutions. As the education and economic needs of Maine continue to change, independent research will show JMG makes a difference even for students who face the highest barriers, including economically disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, and youth-in-foster-care. JMG's vision is to be a champion for all Maine students facing barriers to education. We have a longstanding history of directly addressing inequities, including racial inequities, to ensure all students have access to student-centered education. JMG embraces differences of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, socioeconomics and culture. We understand Maine's future will be a reflection of what we commit and contribute to our youth.*



## Strategic Priorities: 2020-2025

- 2. Invest deeply in organizational development to support and honor the dedication of our Specialists, strengthening the internal capacity needed to deliver most effectively on mission, while upholding a positive culture based on shared values.**

Our objectives include the following:

- a. Embrace the significant growth JMG has achieved in the past five years, and take the time and effort needed to reinforce organizational excellence.
- b. Achieve programmatic excellence by solidifying best-in-class practices for new models launched in the past five years; and, continue to develop forward-thinking and innovative approaches.
- c. Advance systems and tools to better support employees and strengthen the position of the organization.

What this means: *This will include attention to key messaging and delivery, leadership development, team building, employee voice and recognition, professional development, and the fostering of a robust and vibrant culture. The College Success model and the Pathway Navigator positions have shown early promise, and a commitment must be made to capture and clearly define what works best and what is replicable. There is significant opportunity to expand and enhance the growth of these models and/or develop new variations of these models. JMG will invest in a new data infrastructure to support the development of a new model that will update the relevancy of competencies; and, create instructional tools and learning strategies — that are student-centered and results driven—in partnership with public education, higher education, and employers. New opportunities for students will include better defined pathways to earn college credits and micro-credentials prior to graduating from high school.*



## Strategic Priorities: 2020-2025

### 3. Sustain and maximize a diversification of revenue resources.

Our objectives include the following:

- a. Solidify a stronger fiscal position, leveraging the expertise of the ad-hoc Investment Advisory Committee to fully leverage an endowment, maximize additional assets, and achieve stellar stewardship of current and future investors.
- b. Promote JMG as a key partner to Maine’s Departments of Health and Human Services, Education, Labor, Economic and Community Development, and the Office of Innovation and the Future.
- c. Continue to advance affiliate business structure.

What this means: *JMG has expanded revenue resources, and as new “asks” are made of prospective funders, the ability to clearly articulate expectations and messaging will be critical as JMG’s funding resources continue to evolve. JMG is the only statewide nonprofit in Maine formally partnering with all three agencies: Maine’s Departments of Health and Human Services, Education, and Labor; and, we are deepening our relationship with the Department of Economic and Community Development and the new Office of Policy and Innovation. Within these partnerships, there exist more opportunities to define and promote common priorities and funding resources. Notably, JMG was cited as an example of an effective key partner in providing career exploration and essential skill development in the Maine Economic Development Strategic Ten-Year Plan released in November 2019. In JMG’s prior strategic plan, we created a new business affiliate structure, and we will continue to build upon this framework to both capture revenue streams not accessible to JMG Inc., and, generate revenue back to the core JMG organization.*



## KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Student Outcomes: This new strategic plan sets a vision for improved, more significant programmatic outcomes that take our expectations for student success well beyond high school graduation. JMG will align its expectations for student performance outcomes to the State of Maine’s strategy, formally adopted in statute in 2019, to ensure all Mainers earn a minimum of a post-secondary credential of value.

With this commitment in place, JMG will transition away from the previous “5 for 5” outcomes, which focus primarily on high school graduation as a benchmark for success; and, we will adopt a new level of student performance outcomes, setting the expectation as high school graduation as the minimum milestone on a pathway to post-secondary education and career skill development.

### NEW JMG “True North” Student Outcomes

Attainment 4-Year HS Graduation Post-Secondary Credential and/or College Degree	Attainment JMG Micro-Credential earned in High School	Engagement Full-time Engagement	Pursuit Post-Secondary Credential	Persistence Middle School, High School, College Success
<b>When:</b> - End of Senior Year - Within Six Years After High School Graduation	<b>When:</b> -JMG Senior Year	<b>When:</b> 12 Months After High School Graduation	<b>When:</b> 12 Months After High School Graduation; up to age of 24 years.	<b>When:</b> Annually
<b>Audience:</b> All students who had JMG at any time in high school (HS Graduation)  All students who participate in JMG’s senior year program (Credential)	<b>Audience:</b> Primarily seniors; some juniors who demonstrate readiness	<b>Audience:</b> JMG H.S. graduates from the previous year’s Senior Roster	<b>Audience:</b> JMG H.S. graduates from the previous year’s Senior Roster; up to age of 24 years.	<b>Audience:</b> All JMG students, previous year’s roster
<b>Benchmark:</b> HS Graduation Rate  Degree/Credential Attainment Rate (6 Years Out)	<b>Benchmark:</b> HS Senior Micro-Credential attainment	<b>Benchmark:</b> 32 hours of engagement – post-secondary, career path, military	<b>Benchmark:</b> Active pursuit of post-secondary credential (6 Years Out)	<b>Benchmark:</b> Stay-in-school rate, year-to-year

## KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Organization Outcomes: The JMG Board of Directors and executive team leaders will maintain a common set of expectations for organizational key performance indicators, benchmarking on a year-to-year basis throughout this five-year strategic plan. Additionally, specific key performance indicators will be developed for each organizational category on an annual basis to ensure continued advancement of key strategic priorities and outcomes. The categories for organizational key performance outcomes will include:

### **1. Fiscal Oversight**

Standard: Each year, the executive team of JMG will successfully execute the Board Approved Budget, ensuring all targeted sources of revenue are secured to meet the expenses as planned. Quarterly updates will be provided, with timely reports and solid rationale for any anticipated deviations.

### **2. Organizational Development**

Standard: Successfully hire, train, and onboard more new employees and launch new programs, ensuring the JMG brand is understood and positioned well. Given the expected change process needed to implement the strategic plan, organizational development will require extensive culture and team building, including greater coordination and more frequent outreach from the executive and management leadership teams to Specialists and new partners. Ultimately, this success will be measured by achieving programmatic outcomes.

### **3. Private Development and Fundraising**

Standard: Successfully meet private fundraising goals, this includes meeting the current fiscal year's goal; and, obtaining new multi-year commitments beginning for future fiscal years. This will require exceptional stewardship of current investors, and successfully identifying and securing new funders.

### **4. New Business Structure Advancement**

Standard: The new business structure, having been in place for three years as this new strategic plan begins, continues to evolve. The executive team members of GenUS and GenME will continue to demonstrate the value of this structure, to include both the generation of new revenue sources as well as seizing opportunities to advance innovation. The framework of the structure provides an opportunity for bolder risk taking, and an ongoing expectation will be new opportunities will continue to be developed and shared with the board to continue so that the affiliate structure can "scout" new opportunities to both support and fold back into JMG.

### **5. Strategic Plan**

Standard: With this new Strategic Plan in place, it is recognized the Board of Directors and the JMG Executive Team is making a commitment to a comprehensive and enormous change process. On an annual basis the JMG Executive Team will be tasked with demonstrating the execution of a change process that includes board member participation, organizational advancement and culture building, and ownership of a five-year strategic plan to successfully bring the organization to 2025 and beyond.

# JMG's Microbadge Model Framework

7 Competency Buckets	Middle School Exploration	High School Exposure	Senior Year Experience
	Creativity and Innovation ♦ Critical Thinking ♦ Communication ♦ Collaboration		
Flexibility & Adaptability	<p>i.e. Resiliency</p> <p>Repetition &amp; Reinforcement</p>	<p>i.e. Public Speaking</p>	
Initiative & Self Direction			<p>Three-Credit College Course: Thomas College</p>
Social & Cross-Cultural Skills			
Productivity & Accountability			
Leadership & Responsibility			
Career & College Readiness			
Information, Media, Technology			



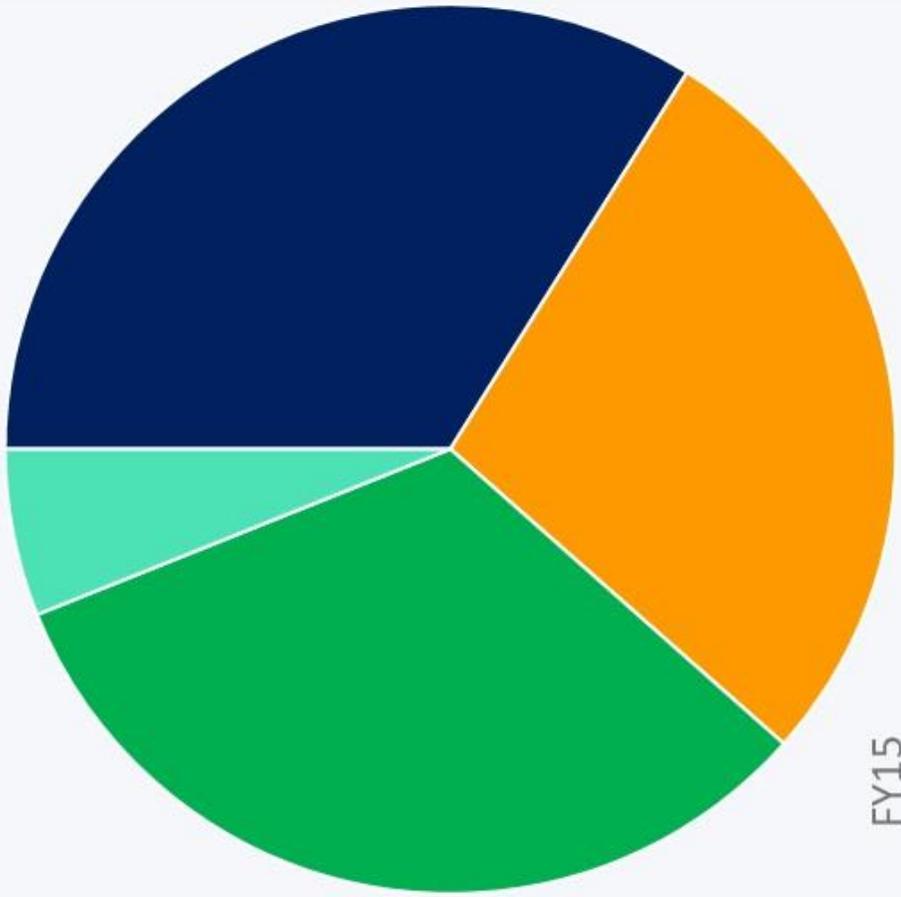
## REVIEW OF FIVE-YEAR ORGANIZATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

FISCAL YEAR 15	FISCAL YEAR 17	FISCAL YEAR 18	FISCAL YEAR 19	FISCAL YEAR 20
Total of 80 programs 5,150 students served annually	Total of 91 programs 6,500 students served annually	Total of 104 programs 7,000 students served annually	Total of 131 programs 9,000 students served annually	Total of 143 programs 10,000+ students served annually
Specialist starting salary: \$31,500	Specialist starting salary: \$33,000	Specialist starting salary: \$34,000	Specialist starting salary: \$35,000	Specialist starting salary: \$40,000
10-year Specialist compensation: \$39,189 Specialist highest compensation: \$56,271	10-year Specialist compensation: \$42,535 Specialist highest compensation: \$55,636	10-year Specialist compensation: \$44,535 Specialist highest compensation: \$59,636	10-year Specialist compensation: \$47,035 Specialist highest compensation: \$60,000	10-year Specialist compensation: \$53,035 Specialist highest compensation: \$65,000
Newly secured public funds: \$300,000	Newly secured public funds: \$500,010	Newly secured public funds: \$1,250,494	Newly secured public funds: \$2,476,040	Newly secured public funds: \$1,000,000
College Success: one program at Thomas College	One-time financial literacy award: \$1,500,000	State appropriation increase: \$350,000	Contribution into retirement: \$250	Payroll deduction added for NextGen 529
Total budget: \$7,630,475	Total budget: \$8,054,319	Total budget: \$8,780,437	Total budget: \$11,181,224	Total budget: \$12,341,096
Development goal: \$925,000	Development goal: \$1,683,077	Development goal: \$898,459*	Development goal: \$1,688,088	Development goal: \$1,811,268
SGF investment: \$375,000	SGF investment: \$500,000	SGF investment: \$400,000  *first year sunset of Nellie Mae grant	SGF investment: \$400,000	SGF investment: \$400,000
New Executive/Management Capacity: This was the first year of the new 2015-2020 Strategic Plan. Consultant, Carole Martin and attorney, Nelson Toner worked with subcommittee of the board and Craig and Kim to develop new business structure and three-year business plan to launch the GenUS and GenME affiliated businesses.	New Executive/Management Capacity: Elevated role of VP of Finance to Chief Operating Officer, Nate Pelsma. (note – Dena Shorey, Accounts Specialist was promoted to Accounts Manager and completed MBA degree); and, added the new position of Director of Operations to directly support team of Regional Managers.	New Executive/Management Capacity: Added position of Chief Strategy Officer for GenME, David Galin; and, filled vacant position of Vice President of Institutional Advancement with Heather Douglass. Added new Accounting Specialist and New Development Manager. Also one-year part-time position, offered in-kind by Unity Foundation, to support 25 <sup>th</sup> Gala.	New Executive/Management Capacity: Added two new Regional Managers and a Data Manager. Refined Chief Strategy Officer to provide executive oversight of JAG New England and other GenerationME initiatives. Seek to add workforce development executive capacity mid-year.	New Executive/Management Capacity: Added two new Assistant Directors of Operations, one new Regional Manager, new Assistant to Chief of Staff for more executive team capacity.



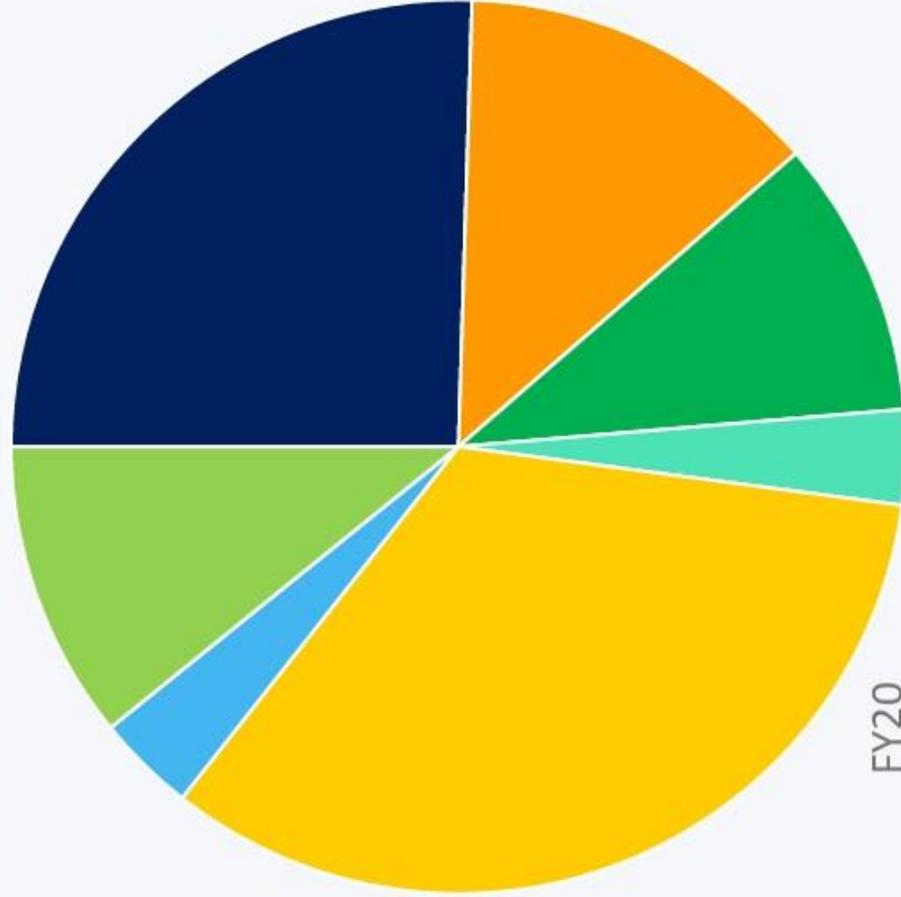
# Funding Sources

FY15 and FY20



- State Appropriations
- School Contributions

- Development
- Contracted Services = GenME



- DOL
- DHHS

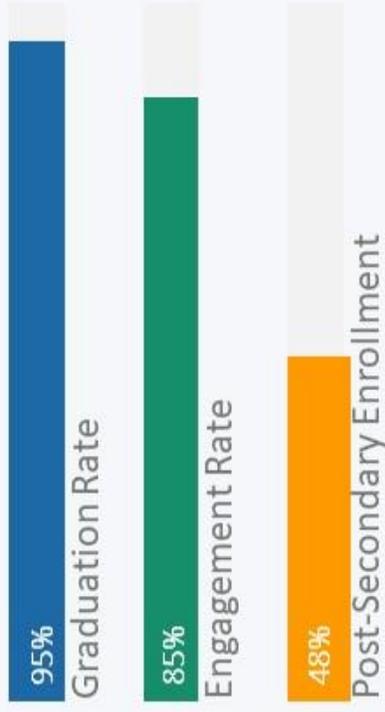
- Gala and Endowment



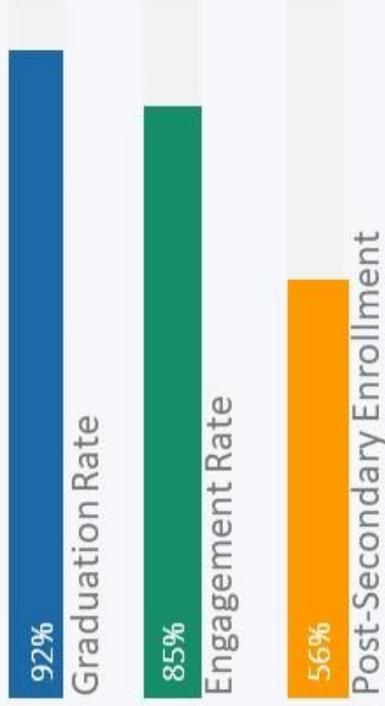
# Outcomes

FY15 and FY19

FY15



FY19



## JMG students earn 14% more in wages

According to a Maine Department of Labor study, six years after high school graduation, JMG students are earning 14\$ more than all other students of the same age.



## Significant wage growth for JMG graduates

Despite barriers, JMG graduates experienced significant, consistent, and sustained wage increases after high school, more than 10 times the rate of inflation.



## Higher high school graduation rates for students with disabilities

AIR found that students with disabilities who enroll in JMG are 17 percentage points more likely to graduate high school than their peers with disabilities not enrolled in JMG.



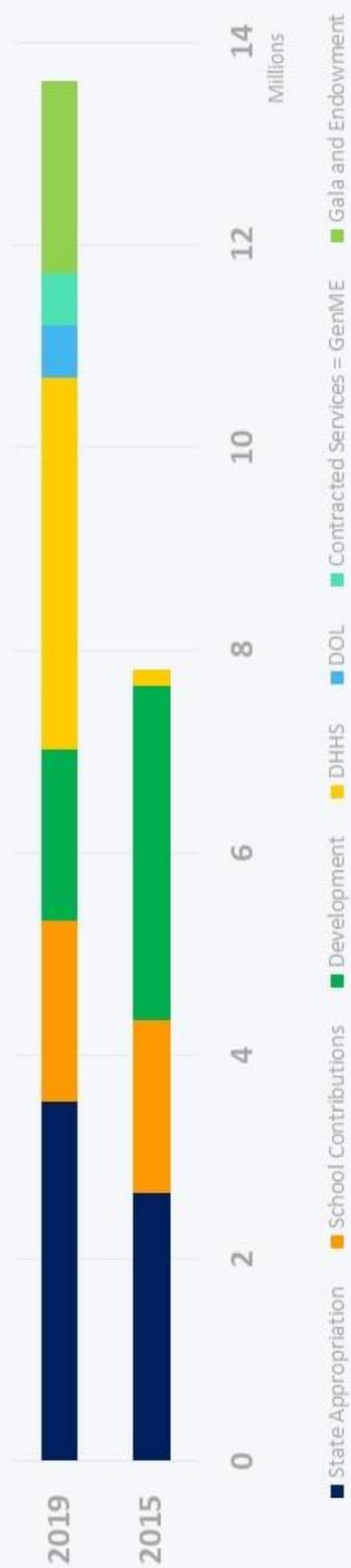
## JMG College Success Program supports persistence

Two-thirds of students in the JMG College Success Program who enrolled in college between 2015-2017 are still enrolled today, and 85% are still in college or working full-time.



# Comparison

FY15 and FY19





# REFERENCE DOCUMENTS





## 2018 Grant Report

Dear Friends of the Harold Alfond Foundation:

We are pleased to share this Grant Report summarizing our work in 2018 and offering guidance on future grantmaking.<sup>1</sup> For updates throughout the year and additional information on the Foundation's work, please visit our website at [www.haroldalfondfoundation.org](http://www.haroldalfondfoundation.org).

### Financial Data and 2018 Grant Funding

Since Harold Alfond's passing over 11 years ago, the Foundation has awarded \$340 million in grant support, primarily in Maine.

After payment of all grants and operating expenses in 2018, the Foundation closed the calendar year with assets north of \$819 million, down significantly from \$864 million at the year-end of 2017. This decrease was a result of two factors: (1) \$41.3 million in grant spending; and (2) no growth in the value of our investment portfolio.

In 2018, the Foundation's grants totaling \$41.3 million were paid to 49 organizations, with spending (on a dollar basis) highly concentrated among 10 recipients. Geographically, over 95% of the Foundation's funding was paid to Maine institutions. Consistent with Harold Alfond's long-time preference for supporting Central Maine communities, over 40% of funding was awarded in this region of the state. Once again, the Foundation invested significant dollars (nearly \$14.5 million) in Waterville.

As noted in previous reports, one might hope Foundation investments will increase lock-step every year. But markets are volatile, and the Foundation, like all investors, will experience negative or flat returns in some years. Such a year was 2018, as a dramatic fourth quarter market decline, triggered by Federal Reserve interest rate tightening, erased our portfolio's gains for the year. Even so, the Foundation's portfolio experienced a negative return of less than one-half of one percent on the year (0.4%). As this report is published, investment returns have surged, and our assets have recovered and now exceed the 2017 year-end value.

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<sup>1</sup> Committed to operating in a transparent manner, the Foundation is sharing this letter as one of several means by which we distribute information about our grantmaking and other significant financial, operational, and programmatic activities.

## Future Grant Commitments

As of January 1, 2019, the Foundation had binding grant commitments—money payable to charitable institutions for projects in *future* years—of over \$113 million, up significantly from the \$62 million and \$54 million reported a year and two years ago, respectively.<sup>2</sup> The 2019 increase (on a net basis) is the result of several new grant commitments, many of which are described in this report.

Grant spending for 2019 is expected to equal or exceed \$47 million. Most of this amount has already been committed and will be paid to Maine institutions.

### Grantmaking Mission, Values, and Areas of Interest

Over the past year, the Foundation held a series of Board and staff conversations geared toward reflecting on and refining the Foundation’s grantmaking preferences and strategy. Informing this process, like so much of what we do, were the philanthropic principles and pattern of giving of Harold Alfond, as well as the state’s evolving needs and opportunities. Through this work, the Foundation reaffirmed a grantmaking approach and philosophy that continues to favor high-quality leadership, entrepreneurial and creative solutions, teamwork, and “skin in the game” on the part of our grantees. The Foundation’s mission and values, restated as part of our planning process, are shared in Footnote 3 below and, going forward, will continue to guide how we think about grant opportunities.<sup>3</sup>

### Present Thinking and Future Direction

In his semiannual testimony to the United States Senate, Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell described the U.S. economy as healthy in many ways but hindered by multiple “longer-run challenges,” such as low labor force participation among prime-age men and women,

<sup>2</sup> The Foundation’s \$113 million of unpaid grant commitments *does not* include (1) the Foundation’s long-term commitment to the Harold Alfond College Challenge or (2) the Foundation’s commitment to backstop MaineGeneral Medical Center’s “Debt Service Reserve Fund” in the approximate amount of \$23 million (see details in the 2011 and 2012 Grant Reports). It *does* include the Foundation’s remaining commitment to fund the Alfond Leaders Student Debt Reduction Program.

<sup>3</sup> **Mission:**

*The Harold Alfond Foundation honors and promotes the values of its founder through transformative investments for the benefit of Maine in education, health care, and youth and community development.*

**Values:**

*We value and invest in:*

- *Young People* — they are the future of Maine, and we collectively owe them healthy communities, high-quality educational opportunities, and the chance to learn and grow through teamwork and athletics;
- *Leaders and Entrepreneurs* — the health and well-being of our communities rely on addressing pressing needs with strong leadership, creative and entrepreneurial solutions, and teamwork and partnership;
- *Opportunities* — we look to find new and bold opportunities, where our investments can make a difference, may support the “underdog,” and promote healthy competition and “skin in the game;”
- *High-Quality Education and Health Care* — an educated and healthy citizenry is vital for the future success of Maine, well-being of our communities, and strength of our economy. Those who live, work, play, and grow in our state deserve the very best educational institutions and health care services.

stagnant incomes for many families, and a lack of upward economic mobility among people with lower incomes.<sup>4</sup>

As the Harold Alfond Foundation surveys the national landscape, we see an economy in transition. We see that small towns and rural areas of the country are struggling with the challenges of global competition and innovation of an accelerating data and technology driven economy. Given the Foundation's interest in higher education, three statistics are emblematic of this transition and the challenges it has created.

First, there is persuasive evidence that prime-age workers in the bottom 60% of income have had no real inflation-adjusted income growth since 1980.<sup>5</sup>

Second, while higher education correlates strongly with higher income, 60% of Americans have not had the benefit of completing higher education in *any* form;<sup>6</sup> and,

Third, 60% or more of America's future jobs will require our citizens to have higher education in *some* form and with content that imparts skills needed in our global economy.<sup>7</sup>

That 60% of our citizens are at risk of being left behind poses enormous cultural, economic, and political risks and challenges. In our globally competitive world, with the emergence of artificial intelligence and automation, we see especially foreboding challenges facing our nation's middle class, and less-advantaged youth and young adults, in particular.

These risks and challenges are particularly acute in Maine, a state with large rural areas, a stagnant birth rate, aging population, and a declining skilled workforce. In past reports,<sup>8</sup> we have described this combination as a "perfect storm" and declared our interest in grants which would:

- Enhance undergraduate and graduate education in the business and STEM fields;
- Incentivize more skilled workers to stay in the state or to move here;
- Support initiatives designed to accelerate the creation or growth of businesses in focused sectors of Maine's economy; and,
- Increase post-secondary educational attainment of all citizens from all walks of life.

<sup>4</sup> "Semiannual Monetary Policy Report to the Congress." Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell. February 26, 2019. <https://www.federalreserve.gov/newsevents/testimony/powell20190226a.htm>

<sup>5</sup> "Our Biggest Economic, Social, and Political Issue." October 23, 2017. Ray Dalio. <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/our-biggest-economic-social-political-issue-two-economies-ray-dalio/>

<sup>6</sup> "A Stronger Nation." 2019. Lumina Foundation. <http://strongernation.luminafoundation.org/report/2019/#nation>

<sup>7</sup> "Recovery: Job Growth and Education Requirements Through 2020." June 26, 2013. Georgetown University. [https://cew.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Recovery2020.ES\\_Web\\_.pdf](https://cew.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Recovery2020.ES_Web_.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> Two examples are the 2017 Grant Report (pages 2-3) and the 2013 Grant Report (page 3). Both reports are available at <http://www.haroldalfondfoundation.org/history.htm>

Since then, a 2018 report on the Maine economy has shed further light on our state's demographic and workforce challenges. The report references a survey of Maine business and education leaders (by Market Decisions Research) finding that, all across Maine's economy, employers are having trouble finding skilled workers, such as technical and professional workers.<sup>9</sup> In addition, the study provided compelling evidence of the major need for "middle-skill" workers, who require more than a high school education, but not a four-year or even a two-year degree, yet are so important to keeping the wheels of our economy turning. Thousands of jobs are being posted, many going unfilled.

With this report in mind, we have expanded and refined our list of objectives to include grant outcomes which:

- Better align academic curricula with the state's workforce needs;
- Increase higher education access, opportunity, and training for unemployed and under-employed workers by offering shorter term, non-credit, diverse, non-traditional education linked to employer needs at lower cost; and,
- Support education initiatives which build workforce skills required by the fastest-growing segments of the global economy, such as computer technology and the life sciences.

The Foundation now has some \$40 million committed and payable to higher education and other institutions over the next decade to promote workforce and economic development in Maine. We look to commit more. In the pages ahead, we review the Foundation's work in 2018 and its emphasis on the workforce and economic development challenges and opportunities described above.

## Harold Alfond College Challenge

Established in 2008, the Foundation's signature grant program, the Harold Alfond College Challenge, awards a \$500 grant to every Maine resident baby for education beyond high school. This program represents a long-term strategy by the Foundation to increase aspirations and access to higher education among Maine's young people and to build our future workforce. In partnership with the Alfond Scholarship Foundation (ASF) and Finance Authority of Maine (FAME), the program has four goals:

- 1) To increase awareness of the \$500 grant so that Maine families know they have it and why it matters ("Awareness");

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<sup>9</sup> "Making Maine Work: Critical Investments for the Maine Economy." December, 2018. Maine State Chamber of Commerce, Maine Development Foundation, and Educate Maine. [https://www.mdf.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/MMW\\_2018\\_FullReportsm.pdf](https://www.mdf.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/MMW_2018_FullReportsm.pdf)

coordinating hub of Maine's graduate programs and tasked with building and leveraging relationships in the business, legal, and public service communities.

In the spirit of Harold Alfond, our \$7.5 million Maine Center grant is a challenge grant, with each payment tied to tangible progress and performance. We look forward to paying every cent!

We hear from many of our education partners on the front lines that the social, emotional, and financial barriers facing today's young people are numerous and increasingly complex, threatening to derail even the most resilient students. Since its founding in 1993, **Jobs for Maine's Graduates** has helped 50,000 young Mainers persist on the path from education to employment. JMG has received our support in years past. And does it ever deliver!

So, in 2018, we decided to invest still further by committing \$4.5 million, payable over four years, to support JMG's endowment and expand the organization's "College Success" program. This program ensures that young students have the support they need to prepare for, enroll in, and ultimately succeed at college and in the workplace. With our support, the program now extends to all of Maine's public colleges and universities (in addition to Thomas College<sup>12</sup>) and includes four new "Pathway Navigators" to help JMG alumni around the state get back in pursuit of a degree or credential of value.

In last year's report, we said that no other organization in America is as good at increasing high school graduation rates, college retention, and degree attainment among youth as JMG. We love being right about our grantees—especially when we are right year after year. In 2018, JMG was named—for the 23<sup>rd</sup> consecutive time—"Best Program in the Nation" by its national affiliate, Jobs for America's Graduates. Our congratulations and thanks to JMG's outstanding leadership, Craig Larrabee and Kim Lipp, and to all JMG Specialists and staff for their commitment to Maine's kids. Not only does every young person in Maine deserve the opportunity to reach his or her full potential—our state's future depends on it.

## *Health Care*

Seven percent of the Foundation's grant spending in 2018 was directed to Health Care. While a modest percentage of the overall grant budget, the Foundation's Health Care grants are helping to improve the health and wellness of Mainers, especially those affected by cancer.

At over 3,000 deaths a year, cancer is the leading cause of death in Maine. Studies by the Center for Disease Control and National Cancer Institute suggest that rural cancer patients experience the worst survival rates, because they do not have ready access to advanced therapies, such as clinical trials. In Maine, where 61% of the population live in rural areas,

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<sup>12</sup> The Foundation awarded grant funds to Thomas in 2015 to support student retention efforts, which included a pilot of the JMG College Success model.





*Board of Trustees*  
*Gregory W. Powell, Chairman*  
*Theodore B. Alfond*  
*William L. Alfond*  
*Peter H. Lunder*  
*Steven P. Akin*  
*Theresa M. Stone*  
*David T. Flanagan*  
*Barry Mills*

September 19, 2019

Bruce Wagner, CEO  
Finance Authority of Maine  
5 Community Drive  
Augusta, ME 04332

Dear Bruce:

On behalf of the Harold Alfond Foundation, we would like to commend the Governor and your team for their work in developing a strategic economic development plan for Maine. In follow-up to discussions you and I have had, this letter is to offer four policy suggestions for consideration in your plan. These suggestions are borne out of our experience as Maine's largest philanthropic foundation and are aligned with the Task Force's three stated goals to raise the productivity of Maine's workers, increase their income, and grow the workforce. As CEO of FAME, you are familiar with many of the Foundation's investments, and we are most grateful for your leadership and partnership. Yet some Task Force members may not be so deeply versed, so please excuse the information detailed below of which you are already aware.

\*\*\*\*\*

The **Harold Alfond College Challenge**, the Foundation's signature grant program, awards \$500 to every Maine resident baby for that child's education beyond high school. To date, the Foundation has awarded over \$51 million to nearly 103,000 Maine children. Families of some 20% of these children have in turn contributed over \$80 million of their own funds to their children's NextGen 529 college savings accounts. And FAME, a key partner in administering the program, has contributed an additional \$12 million to family accounts through a matching program to incentivize higher education savings. In total, nearly \$144 million has been invested for the future higher education of Maine children.

Because the \$500 grant became automatic for all Maine newborns in January of 2013, we now have entire classrooms of kindergarten students statewide who have the Alfond grant as a starting place to save for higher education. However, one of the main goals of the College Challenge – family savings through Maine's NextGen Program - has not been realized: almost 80% of those born since 2013 do not have NextGen 529 college savings account. This suggests a bold policy proposal for your consideration:

***Policy Suggestion #1 – Attract young families to Maine and solidify Maine’s national leadership in college savings rates by opening and contributing to a NextGen 520 college savings account for every child born in or moving to Maine.***

Maine leads the nation in promoting college savings. And across the nation, other states and municipalities are following our lead. Imagine what it would mean to the legacy of the Governor’s economic plan and to the achievements of this Task Force if every child born in Maine were to have a NextGen 529 account. Such an accomplishment would lead to exponentially higher college-going and completion rates, a more educated workforce, and a stronger economy. In partnership with policy goals #2 and #3 below, this strategy could encourage a legion of young families to move to Maine. While ambitious, we believe this goal would not only send a powerful and positive message nationwide about Maine, but could be largely engineered through strategic engagement with the public education system; in particular, by implementing an initiative focused on enrolling students in NextGen as they enter kindergarten and perhaps other grades. Kindergarten is an especially propitious time to increase NextGen account openings as it is not only an education milestone, but also when parents are already completing paperwork with much of the same information required to open 529 accounts.

Because 529 accounts can be used for a variety of post-secondary education options, not just traditional college, we believe that this policy goal could help make significant progress towards the Task Force’s first two stated goals, i.e. to increase Maine workers’ productivity and their incomes.

\*\*\*\*\*

The **Alfond Leaders Student Debt Program** is an initiative that helps address Maine’s STEM workforce shortage by incentivizing STEM workers to live and work in Maine. It does this through student debt reduction awards of 50% of a worker’s student debt, up to \$60,000 per person. Through the program’s first two years of operations, 92 Maine STEM workers were selected as ‘Alfond Leaders’. They live in 14 Maine counties and are employed by 65 Maine companies, ranging from large publicly-traded firms to small start-ups. All 92 are living and working here in Maine, contributing to our economy with an estimated “economic footprint” of over \$50,000,000 annually, a figure which takes into account their estimated earnings, the business sales generating those earnings, and the indirect impact of those earnings and sales as they flow through the Maine economy.

However, even though student debt reduction payments go directly to the lenders, Leaders have to pay taxes on these debt payments as if the awards were their income. This weakens the program’s ability to attract and retain professionals in Maine and runs counter to the goals of the program. In short, it diminishes what otherwise would be a very strong program, and one unique to Maine. As these are the only grants the Foundation makes that are taxable, it also is a strong disincentive to the Foundation to expand the program to more STEM professionals. These challenges suggest two policy changes for your consideration:

***Policy Suggestion #2 – Attract and retain talented professionals in Maine by exempting from state income taxes any student debt relief made by philanthropic organizations.***

This change would eliminate the disincentive that current state tax law presents for recruiting and retaining skilled workers in Maine generally and Alfond Leaders in particular. It would be a meaningful step forward with no cost to our state. That said, Leaders still owe federal income tax on their awards. This suggests another change that would put Maine at a competitive advantage nationwide for attracting STEM professionals from around the country.

***Policy Suggestion #3*** – Provide a first-in-the-nation state tax credit for federal income tax liability related to philanthropic student debt relief.

As far as we know, Maine would be the only state to offer such a credit. Along with the Opportunity Maine Tax Credit, we believe these two policy changes could give Maine a strategic edge in the fight to recruit young talented workers to the state, and would contribute significantly to the Task Force's third goal to grow Maine's labor force.

\*\*\*\*\*

Finally, since 2011, the Foundation has granted over \$15 million to **the Maine Community College System (MCCS) and Jobs for Maine's Graduates (JMG)**, separately but for related reasons. Both organizations are at the forefront of your Task Force's goal to better align workers' skills with employers' needs. They are also partners in improving the college retention and success rates for Maine students. The Foundation recently granted \$3.6 million to MCCS's emerging short-term credentialing initiative; this initiative develops short-term occupational training programs in areas like nursing and welding. During the three years of the grant, MCCS will serve 300 students. The Foundation has also recently granted JMG almost \$6 million to aid in its development of a continuum of support from middle school and high school to college and the workforce. JMG's support system not only helps youth graduate high school and college but gives them critical life and career skills. The similar objectives and collaborative spirit of the two organizations suggest a final policy idea for your consideration.

***Policy Suggestion #4*** – Direct MCCS and JMG to expand and hasten their development of short-term workforce credentials and micro-badges that respond to the immediate needs of Maine employers, replete with both technical and soft skills, and with a full suite of student success support services, including financial aid.

\*\*\*\*\*

We offer these policy suggestions in the spirit of the Foundation's long-standing partnership with Maine state government and with FAME in particular. On behalf of the Trustees of the Harold Alfond Foundation, thank you for the opportunity to share these thoughts with your Task Force, and please let us know if we can help you in any way.

Sincerely,



Gregory W. Powell  
Chairman of the Board

cc: Dave Daigler, Craig Larrabee, John Fitzsimmons  
GWP/mad





Dear JMG Supporters,

For twenty-five years, JMG has helped at-risk youth stay in school and enter the workforce with the skills and self-confidence that employers demand. JMG's authentic, cohort-based approach has given 50,000 youth a reason to stay connected at a critical time in their lives. Their model supports deep, competency-based skill building that is cost-effective today, and will pay enormous dividends tomorrow as we avoid the financial and opportunity costs that arise when youth disengage from school and work.

And it works: 92% of JMG seniors graduate from high school; 85% of JMG graduates experience positive outcomes one year after graduation in the form of school, employment, or the military; and six years later, JMG graduates are earning 14% more than their peers.

That JMG can so clearly point to positive outcomes demonstrates the deep commitment that JMG has to data and accountability. In the high-stakes of working with at-risk youth, anecdotes do not cut it. We must objectively evaluate what works and what doesn't. JMG's data-driven culture and their willingness to use data to make changes is a key component of their success in helping youth overcome significant obstacles.

What about the next twenty-five years? Now more than ever, JMG's role is critical, both in the hard work of preparing youth for life on their own, and in the broader effort of workforce development. To grow Maine's economy tomorrow, we need to ensure that today's young people enter the Maine workforce with relevant skills, talent, and motivation. Research tells us that trying to bring youth back into the fold after they have disengaged is expensive and fraught with failure. JMG is well-positioned to use their school-based intervention model to keep youth connected and to play an outsized role in addressing Maine's workforce challenges.

One of the primary ways JMG will help Maine address its future workforce needs is with their expansion to college campuses. JMG will now be confronting some of the most critical workforce development challenges of our time by working with college-going young people to ensure they earn credentials of value and do not drop out. JMG is the right organization at the right time to take on this problem, and I am proud to join you in celebrating JMG's success of the last twenty-five years and offer best wishes for the next twenty-five.

Sincerely,

John Dorrer

BIO

John Dorrer is an economist with over 30 years of experience in workforce development. John's work has focused on the study of labor markets and the efficacy of human capital investments. In Maine and nationally, he has formulated research strategies examining the dynamic relationship between skill requirements and learning objectives, and developed collaborative strategies to more effectively align education and training with workplace demands.





## FOR THE PAST 25 YEARS, JMG HAS BEEN DEDICATED TO SERVING MAINE STUDENTS WITH BARRIERS TO SUCCESS.

JMG is Maine's only education-based, statewide nonprofit offering a continuum of support to students from middle school, through high school graduation, throughout post-secondary education, and onto successful career pathways.

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### Here are some startling facts:

Less than **80%** of economically disadvantaged students in Maine **graduate** high school<sup>1</sup>; and,

Just **20%** have a college degree within **six years** of high school graduation.<sup>2</sup>

**17%** of Maine students with disabilities **drop out** of high school<sup>3</sup>; and,

Only **10%** have a college degree **six years later**.<sup>4</sup>

Less than **3%** percent of Maine youth from the **foster care system** graduate college.<sup>5</sup>

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The vision of JMG is to be a champion for all Maine students who face barriers to education. JMG vigilantly tracks and responds to the outcomes of our programs, always keeping students at the center of the educational process. JMG's successes can clearly be illustrated through measurable, documented performance outcomes. **JMG is Maine's most successful and only statewide high school dropout prevention program.** 92% of JMG high school students graduate high school, compared to 87% for all Maine students. 87% of JMG graduates are in college, working, or in the military one year after high school.

During the past year, **four new research evaluations** have been performed to further analyze the impact of the JMG program. This research, conducted by independent evaluators, provides new insights into the JMG model. The findings are both affirming and a call to action. They show definitively that the JMG model is working, but that more must be done to help disadvantaged students succeed in college and careers.

### **Research Project #1: Significant wage growth increase for JMG graduates**

Stepwise Data Research, an economic research firm located in Yarmouth, Maine, in partnership with the Maine Department of Labor (MDOL), analyzed wage records for 1,500 JMG students who graduated high school in 1998, 2009, or 2010. JMG students in this study began with an average of six documented barriers to success. **Despite these barriers, the research showed that JMG graduates experienced significant, consistent, and sustained wage increases after high school.** Average wages for JMG students who graduated high school in 2010 doubled in the six years after their graduation (+107%).

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<sup>1</sup> Compared to 95% of non-economically disadvantaged students; source: Maine Department of Education Data Warehouse; 4 year graduation rate for the 2017 cohort

<sup>2</sup> Compared to 46% of non-economically disadvantaged students; source: National Student Clearinghouse Student Tracker for High Schools Demographic Report, 2017

<sup>3</sup> Compared to 10% of non-disabled students; source: American Institutes for Research, May 2018

<sup>4</sup> Compared to 43% of non-disabled students; source: National Student Clearinghouse Student Tracker for High Schools Demographic Report, 2017

<sup>5</sup> Burt S. Barnow, Amy Buck, Kirk O'Brien, Peter Pecora, Mei Ling Ellis, and Eric Steiner, "Effective Services for Improving Education And Employment Outcomes For Children And Alumni Of Foster Care Service: Correlates And Educational And Employment Outcomes," Child & Family Social Work (2013): 159.

Average wages for 2009 graduates increased by 137% over six years. For both classes, this represented average annual wage increases of over 18% or \$2,300 per year, more than 10 times the rate of inflation.

### ***Research Project #2: Higher high school graduation rates for students with disabilities***

American Institute for Research (AIR), a global research firm located in Washington D.C., evaluated the effect of JMG programming on high school graduation rates for Maine students with disabilities. The study was commissioned by the Maine Department of Labor as part of a federal grant they received for their vocational rehabilitation services. AIR used a dataset prepared by the Maine Department of Education that identified over 27,000 students with disabilities who first enrolled in high school between 2005 and 2013 and followed them during their four years of high school. **The results showed that students with disabilities who enroll in JMG are 17 percentage points more likely to graduate high school than their peers with disabilities not enrolled in JMG.** These results were statistically significant at the 99% level.

### ***Research Project #3: The JMG College Success Program supports persistence***

Stepwise Data Research analyzed data from three cohorts of students who enrolled in one of ten JMG College Success programs at Maine's public university and community college campuses between 2015-2017. These students were former JMG high school students, youth who had been in the foster care system, or students who had recently received their GED or HiSET diploma. **Two-thirds of students in the JMG College Success Program who enrolled in college between 2015-2017 are still in college today, and 85% are still in college or working full-time.**

### ***Research Project #4: Predictors of college success for JMG students***

The college-going and college-completing rates for students from three JMG graduating classes, 1998, 2009, and 2010 were analyzed by Stepwise Data Research. These college success rates were analyzed with data from the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC), which contains semester-by-semester enrollment and graduation records for 97% of U.S. Title IV, degree-granting institutions. The NSC outcome data was then matched with student-level socio-economic data from JMG. **The most important characteristics that predict a JMG student will earn a college degree are their academic performance in high school, the presence of a special-education disability, and the education level of his/her parents.**

JMG is using this new research to refine its learning strategies, programming, and organizational structure to better support the needs of these youth, and in doing so not only help them, **but also break the cycle of generational poverty by supporting academic success, good decision making, and ensuring job preparation and successful connections to career pathways.** For example, JMG and Maine's Department of Health and Human Services have formed a close collaboration to ensure economically disadvantaged and foster care youth have an opportunity to enroll in JMG programs statewide. All JMG Specialists have received Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) professional development.

**Today, JMG is reaffirming its commitment to Maine's youth, particularly those who are economically disadvantaged, with a disability, or in foster care.** In summary, these research findings are both affirming and a call to action for new strategies to support disadvantaged Maine students. Data evaluation and research have been and will continue to be central to JMG's mission and program.

60%  
by 2025

## Coalition Members

(As of 10/25/17)

### Steering Committee

Alfond Scholarship  
Foundation  
Bath Iron Works  
Coastal Enterprises Inc.  
Educate Maine  
Emanuel and Pauline A. Lerner  
Foundation  
Finance Authority of Maine  
Great Schools Partnership  
Husson University  
John T. Gorman Foundation  
Live and Work in Maine  
Maine Adult Education  
Maine Community College  
System  
Maine Development Foundation  
Maine Maritime Academy  
Maine Municipal Association  
Maine's Pre-K to 12 System  
Partners  
Maine State Chamber of  
Commerce  
Maine State Workforce Board  
Maine College Access  
Network  
Maine Community Foundation  
MELMAC Education Foundation  
New Ventures Maine  
Thomas College  
University of Maine System  
University of New England

### Strong Foundations

Alfond Scholarship  
Foundation  
Educare  
Maine Children's Alliance  
Maine Department of  
Education  
Maine Early Learning  
Investment Group  
Ready Nation/Council for  
a Strong America  
United Way of Greater Portland



## What is MaineSpark?

MaineSpark is a 10-year commitment from Maine's most influential education and business leaders to work together to ensure that Maine's workforce is productive and competitive. MaineSpark organizations connect people with the education, training, jobs, programs and resources needed to thrive in Maine's robust and changing economy. MaineSpark is powered by a coalition of organizations—schools and universities, nonprofits and foundations, government agencies and businesses—with a common goal: **by 2025, 60% of Mainers will hold education and workforce credentials that position Maine and its families for success.**

MaineSpark comprises four tracks, each offering and supporting programs and services for Mainers at all stages of life to reach their education and career goals.

## Who is MaineSpark for?

MaineSpark links people in every stage of life, from every economic and educational background, and from every corner of the state and beyond who are pursuing their goals in this great state with member organizations that provide support and services. Whether you are preparing a child for a bright future, getting ready to start work toward or complete a degree or credential, looking to switch careers, or considering a move to Maine, MaineSpark can connect you to a network of beneficial resources.

## Why is MaineSpark important?

Maine has jobs—excellent jobs in growing industries. And Maine has workers—hard workers with dreams to fulfill. By working together, MaineSpark's team of organizations and services will best serve Mainers who are aspiring to gain access to the skills, knowledge and information needed to land the jobs they want.

**MaineSpark's mission:** to shed light on the current employee/employer mismatch; to close the gap between worker skills and industry needs by connecting people with programs that provide training and education resources and services; to increase the overall educational attainment of Maine's people; and to broaden the understanding that Maine is a state full of opportunities and a great place to live and work.

To connect with  
MaineSpark, or to sign up  
for updates and news,  
go to: [MaineSpark.me](http://MaineSpark.me)

## Press Contact

Ed Cervone  
connect@MaineSpark.me

## Coalition Members

(As of 10/25/17)

### Future Success

Cianbro  
Destination Occupation  
Educate Maine  
Emanuel and Pauline A. Lerner  
Foundation  
Finance Authority of Maine  
GEAR UP  
Island Institute  
Jobs for Maine's Graduates  
Maine Adult Education  
Maine Association of Chamber  
of Commerce Executives  
Maine Community College  
System  
Maine Department of  
Education  
Maine Development Foundation  
Maine Education Opportunity  
Center  
Maine Principals' Association  
Maine School Management  
Association  
Maine State Chamber of  
Commerce  
Maine's Career & Technical  
Education System  
Maine College Access  
Network  
MELMAC Education Foundation  
New Ventures Maine  
University of Maine System

### Adult Promise

Educate Maine  
Finance Authority of Maine  
Goodwill Northern  
New England  
Husson University  
John T. Gorman Foundation  
Maine Adult Education  
Maine Community College  
System  
Maine Community Foundation  
Maine Development Foundation  
Maine Department of Labor  
Maine Educational Opportunity  
Center  
New Ventures Maine  
University of Maine System

### New Opportunities

Live and Work in Maine  
Project>Login (Educate Maine)

To connect with  
MaineSpark, or to sign up  
for updates and news,  
go to: [MaineSpark.me](http://MaineSpark.me)



## Tracks

MaineSpark's coalition members offer and support a wide range of services and resources aligned with the goals of its four tracks. Below are some highlights of the innovative programs offered through its coalition members.



Strong Foundations, for children  
from birth through Sixth Grade

**Strong Foundations** wants all Maine's children to begin life with good educational opportunities and plenty of hope. MaineSpark can connect children to their futures through programs like the Harold Alfond College Challenge, which gives every Maine baby a \$500 start toward higher education costs, and Educare, a state-of-the-art early learning facility for low-income children in Central Maine.



Future Success, for students from Sixth Grade  
through post-secondary education

**Future Success** prepares Maine's youth for college, trainings and career options so they are ready to launch successful adult lives. MaineSpark can connect young people to their futures through programs like JMG's Drop Out Recovery program, which counsels youth back into quality jobs and post-secondary enrollment, and the Island Institute's Island Fellows Program, which places recent college graduates in professional positions in Maine's year-round island communities.



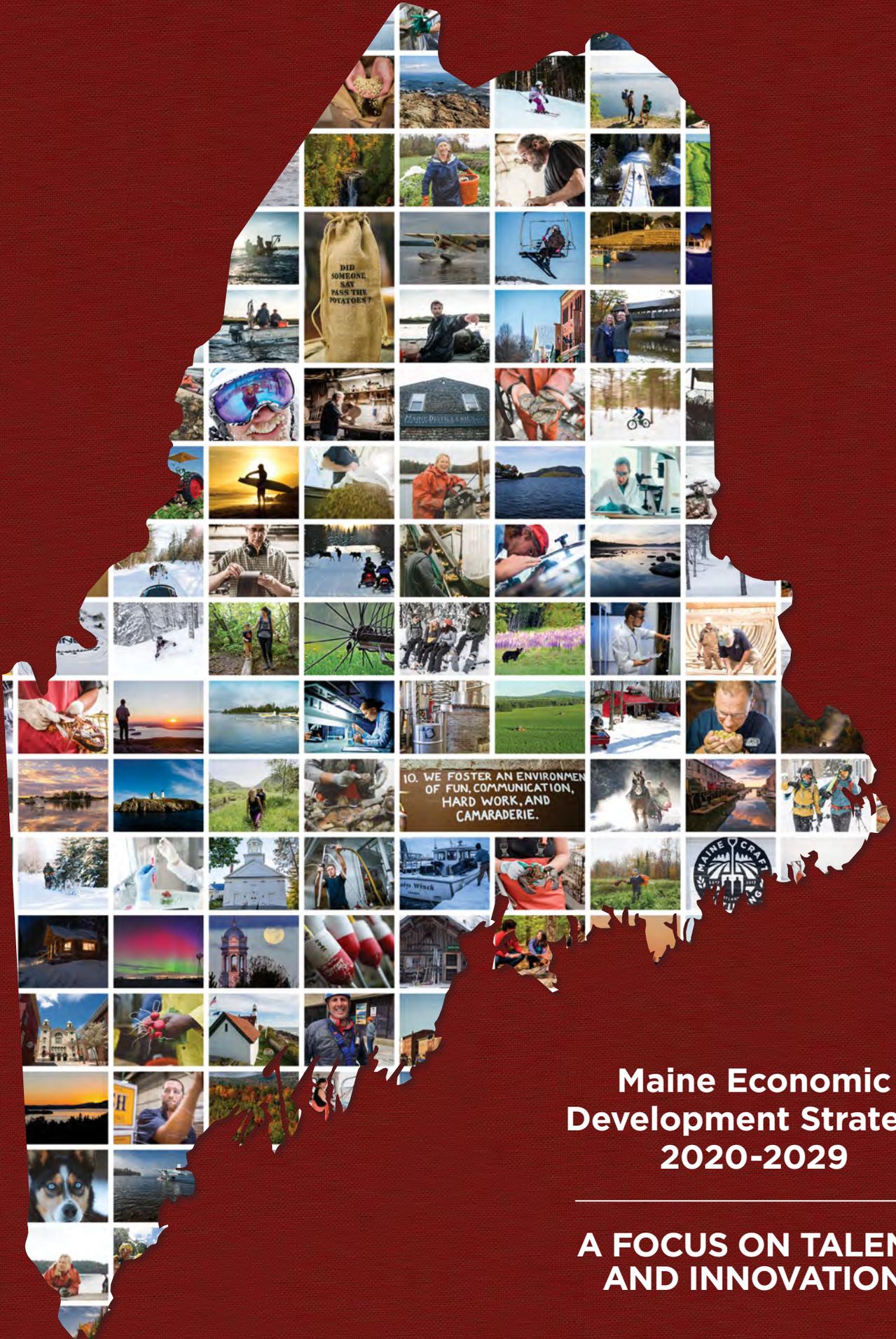
Adult Promise, for those returning to  
complete degrees or change careers

**Adult Promise** offers information, support and resources for those looking to start or finish a degree or certificate, change careers or learn a new trade or skill. MaineSpark can connect Mainers to their futures through programs like the Finance Authority of Maine Lifetime Learning Kit, providing tools that adults need to get ready (and pay) for education beyond high school; and through the University of Maine System's Adult Degree Completion Scholarship.



New Opportunities, for professionals looking  
to move or begin new careers in Maine

**New Opportunities** supports graduates of Maine colleges and other programs who would like to stay and build their careers here, and professionals looking to begin a new chapter of life in Maine. MaineSpark can connect new and potential residents with the resources they need to thrive through programs like Live + Work in Maine's interactive job board, and the Opportunity Maine Tax Credit student loan reimbursement for college graduates.



**Maine Economic  
Development Strategy  
2020-2029**

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**A FOCUS ON TALENT  
AND INNOVATION**

## STRATEGY A

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# grow local talent

In the 21st century, economic development is about investing in people and their communities. In order to grow, communities need to attract and retain talent.

Talent is the new currency. Maine is in competition with other states and the world to build and retain a creative and productive workforce, to attract knowledge industries, and to have a well-educated public that can make wise civic and policy decisions.

There are long and short-run aspects to talent building. For the long run, we will invest in our early care and pre-K system on par with how we invest in the rest of our educational system. We will prepare our children entering kindergarten to succeed. We will prepare all students to achieve the competencies needed to find a place in the future economy.

In the short run, we will help adult workers, who are now (or could be) in the workforce, to upgrade their skills so that they can qualify for better-paying jobs — and to simply keep their own jobs, which will require new skills as technology changes. Currently, 190,000 Maine adults (20%) have begun, but have not yet completed, a postsecondary program of study. Over a third of students at the University of Maine and the Community College Systems are over 25 years old. The education system must be dynamic and available to workers on short notice in response to new job opportunities. Maine unions will have a critical role in identifying opportunities, providing training, and modeling well-established and successful apprenticeship programs.

In 2018, 44% of Maine’s workforce has a work credential that goes beyond a high school diploma.<sup>13</sup> A “credential” is a two or four-year college degree, or a license in the trades, or a professional certificate. The goal set in Maine law to increase this proportion to 60% by 2025.<sup>14</sup>

## THE MAINE EDUCATION FUNNEL EFFECT AND ACHIEVEMENT GAPS

ENTERING 9TH GRADE	100%	100%	100%
HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES	79%	95%	87%
ENROLL IN COLLEGE 2017	40%	71%	55%
RETURN FOR 2ND YEAR OF COLLEGE (2018)	28%	62%	46%
EARN A 2- OR 4-YEAR DEGREE	16%	44%	30%
	ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED	NON-ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED	ALL MAINE STUDENTS

To better prepare Maine students, we must specifically look to help children from economically-disadvantaged<sup>15</sup> backgrounds to achieve success. Almost half of Maine public school students (47%) are disadvantaged. By the time of their first nationally-benchmarked proficiency tests in 4th grade, these children display proficiency in

reading and mathematics at half of the rate of the other students. Going forward, they are less likely to graduate from high school or earn a post-secondary credential. This is why investing in quality early learning is so critical; it ensures that all students enter kindergarten ready to learn and gives every child a good chance for success.

<sup>13</sup> Page 22, Education Indicators for Maine, 2018, Educate Maine.

<sup>14</sup> Workforce Board, Title 26, Chapter 25

<sup>15</sup> Disadvantaged is defined as below 185% of poverty level, which is the criteria used for the free and reduced-price lunch program

## ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE THIS GOAL INCLUDE:

### ACTION A1:

#### Maine's Career Exploration

Research shows that heightened economic mobility for children is a result of “the connectedness, the day-to-day interactions, the diversity of people and experiences, the exposure to others, and sense of belonging.”<sup>16</sup> We will use our neighborhood businesses and employers to enrich student learning.

Maine Career Exploration will start while students are in kindergarten and work with students until one year following graduation from high school. The mission of the program is to connect students and their families to the Maine economy, and to grow our own talent.

The program will work with students on an age-appropriate level to create valuable and rewarding connections to their community, and to explore real opportunities that fit within their individual areas of interest. Workforce skill development will start at a young age and will grow until 100% of Maine students have a 6 month paid internship between their junior year of high school and one year post high school graduation. Paid internships will engage all youth and remove the need to make a choice between needing to earn money and career exploration. Internships will also help establish professional networks for all students, thus expanding their economic mobility.

Elementary age students will be exposed to robotics, technology, and transferable skills that can be utilized in the workforce and create upward mobility. Middle School age students will explore areas of interest that build on their personal strengths and also align to marketplace opportunities. High school students will have opportunities for job shadowing and direct interaction with business, non profits and government (including public safety) to see what is available

Parental engagement will be part of the student experience; this will enable families to learn and grow together.

Students' ability to explore local career opportunities and build community networks is critical to retaining young people in Maine and strengthening civic responsibility.

Current programs such as Junior Achievement and Jobs for Maine Graduates will be key partners in providing support and wrap-around services for students who need additional coaching and soft-skills development.

Maine has several internship/apprenticeship resource sites available:

- Maine Job Link Career Center (Maine Department of Labor)
- Hospitality Maine
- Project Login
- LiveWorkMaine
- Farm Labor Link Network (Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry)

Despite these resources, interns report that it is difficult to understand the apprenticeship/internship system in Maine, and to find listings. The same challenge is faced by new Mainers, Native Americans, low-income students, and minorities. A simplified and well-publicized portal for students is needed.

### ACTION A2:

#### Web Portal matching students and employers

Maine has one website that lists apprenticeship opportunities<sup>17</sup> and two that list internships.<sup>18</sup> Potential interns report that it is difficult to understand the apprenticeship/internship system in Maine, and to find listings.<sup>19</sup> A simplified and well-publicized system will be created. This will be particularly helpful to students who lack access to the informal job market of family and friends, and who need to earn income as part of any experience — students such as new Mainers, African Americans, Native Americans, low-income students, and minorities.

CareerWise Colorado is a successful website for apprenticeships that could serve as a model for Maine. Maine will research best practices from CareerWise and elsewhere in creating its portal.

### ACTION A3:

#### Align curriculums with digital economy skills

The Department of Education is now in the process of reviewing Maine's Career and Educational Development Standards and its Mathematics Standards.<sup>20</sup> These identify skills and knowledge that should be instilled from pre-K through high school graduation in the areas of workplace skills and career knowledge, as well as digital skills. Maine's curriculum will better reflect the

<sup>16</sup> Richard Florida, “Kids Raised in Walkable Cities Earn More Money as a result,” City Lab, 10-24-19

<sup>17</sup> [joblink.maine.gov/ada/r/search/jobs?keywords=apprentice](http://joblink.maine.gov/ada/r/search/jobs?keywords=apprentice)

<sup>18</sup> Hospitality Maine and LiveWorkMaine

<sup>19</sup> Feedback from FocusMaine summer interns 2019

<sup>20</sup> [maine.gov/doe/learning/content/career/review](http://maine.gov/doe/learning/content/career/review) and [maine.gov/doe/learning/content/mathematics/review](http://maine.gov/doe/learning/content/mathematics/review)

1 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

2 **Sec. 1. 26 MRSA §2006, sub-§1, ¶¶I and J**, as enacted by PL 2003, c. 114,  
3 §10, are amended to read:

4 I. Providing policy recommendations to ensure the effectiveness of work-related  
5 programs and services for youth, including youth with disabilities; ~~and~~

6 J. Providing policy recommendations to ensure the effectiveness of work-related  
7 programs and services for "at-risk" youth; and

8 **Sec. 2. 26 MRSA §2006, sub-§1, ¶K** is enacted to read:

9 K. Supporting and tracking progress toward an attainment goal of increasing the  
10 percent of working-age adults holding a high-value certificate, college degree,  
11 vocational education or other industry-recognized credential to 60% by 2025 with a  
12 focus on meeting future workforce needs and reporting annually on progress to the  
13 joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over education and  
14 cultural affairs and the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction  
15 over labor, business, research and economic development matters.

16 **SUMMARY**

17 This bill adds supporting an attainment goal of increasing the percent of working-age  
18 adults holding a high-value certificate, college degree, vocational education or other  
19 industry-recognized credential to 60% by 2025 with a focus on meeting future workforce  
20 needs to the list of responsibilities of the State Workforce Investment Board. The board  
21 may seek information from the Maine Workforce and Education Coalition in regards to  
22 an attainment goal. It also directs the Workforce Investment Board to track the State's  
23 progress toward the attainment goal and to annually report on the progress to the joint  
24 standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over education and cultural  
25 affairs and the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over labor,  
26 business, research and economic development matters.

27 **FISCAL NOTE REQUIRED**

28 **(See attached)**





