



# Maine Community College System

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

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**TO: Senator Rotundo, Representative Gattine  
Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs**

**Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy  
Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs**

**FROM: David Daigler, President, Maine Community College System**

**RE: Statement in support of the Maine Community College System's portion of LD 210: An Act Making Unified Appropriations and Allocations from the General Fund and Other Funds for the Expenditures of State Government and Changing Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2025, June 30, 2026 and June 30, 2027 (A-132 through A-134 and language part EEEE)**

**DATE: February 7, 2025**

Senator Rotundo, Senator Rafferty, Representative Gattine and Representative Murphy, members of the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs, thank you for inviting me to present on the portions of LD 210 that relate to the Maine Community College System (MCCS). I am David Daigler, President of the Maine Community College System.

I am here to testify in support of the portions of LD210 that fund Maine Community College System's Maine Free College Program, general operating costs, and the premiums associated with Maine's Paid Family Medical Leave law. I also need to reiterate the system's need for the \$7.5 million originally included in LD 209, the Supplemental Budget.

**Let's start with Maine Free College, which is part of a long history of this body working to provide economic opportunity to Maine people.**

In 2017 Maine's 128<sup>th</sup> Legislature passed LD 1638, "An Act To Promote Workforce Education Attainment," that placed in law the goal of having 60% on Maine's workforce possess a credential of value by 2025. It was an important recognition of the critical role education plays in creating and sustaining a healthy Maine economy.

We haven't hit that 60% target just yet. The most recent report from Maine's Economic Council says we're at 55% - a hair above the national average. Maine's Free College program is part of reaching that goal.

Free college programs started in Tennessee in 2014 and now exist in 37 states, and for good reason. Employers everywhere are struggling to find skilled workers, challenged by everything from rapidly evolving technology and AI to declining birthrates and dips in college enrollment as students shy away from incurring college debt.

In response, legislatures across the country are building these tuition-free college programs as an incentive for young people to finish high school and continue to on to college. The collective wisdom is that it's a smart investment that pays off in a stronger workforce, and it's a commitment to support their continued education.

Just a few weeks ago, I spoke about the amazing success of Maine's Free College program. Due to this success, the Governor placed \$7.3 million in her recommended supplemental budget to assure that Maine keeps our collective *promise* to high school graduates in the classes of 2020-2025.

And our high school graduates responded in greater numbers than we anticipated. With regard to the \$7.3 million that was under consideration in the supplemental budget, we cannot let our success become our demise. The promise has been made. Our reward is a more highly skilled, better educated workforce able to support our businesses and compete in today's economy.

There have been few education initiatives that have been a more powerful force for moving Maine in the right direction than Maine's Free College initiative.

For the last three years, it has been a very targeted investment in young people by the state, allowing them to learn meaningful skills that start them on the path to become the skilled workers our state so desperately needs.

Yes, it has boosted enrollment. More so than we ever imagined!

That's a good thing. Better than we thought possible.

More students now translates to more graduates later – graduates who will go into the working world, paying taxes, growing businesses – or perhaps continuing their education – another great boon to the state, which needs more highly skilled and educated workers.

You've heard this from me before, but it bears repeating: Maine's seven community colleges have long been the most direct, affordable, and effective investment for meaningfully advancing Maine's economy. It's the most do-able pathway for a low-income student who maybe didn't think she could afford college, or was so scared off by the idea of college debt she didn't even look into it.

Maybe it's someone like Chloe Harvey of Waldoboro, who comes from a long line of lobstermen. She thought she'd go into the family business too, but the encouragement of a CTE instructor and the Free College scholarship led her to enroll in the automotive repair program at Northern Maine Community College.

“I was very against going to college,” Chloe told us recently, looking back to her high school years. “My family wanted me to go, but no one else in my family had gone. But I decided to change it up and go - and I really liked it. It was definitely the best thing I’ve ever done,” she said. “Free college made a difference, it really did.”

While at NMCC, she won excellence awards and graduated in 2023. Today, she’s working at Twisted Iron Customs in Edgecomb. “I love it here, it’s a great crew,” she said.

That’s the power of Free College. That is just one story.

Free College has allowed us to teach more of those students, swelling the pipeline to job placement or transfer to the University of Maine System colleges or other four-year universities. They’re studying the trades, nursing, business, and public safety. Our graduates are police officers, lineworkers, auto mechanics, bankers, and digital security experts.

But the Free College program is really about inspiring the next generation to dream big.

Our tuition is only about \$4,200 a year – the lowest in New England – but even at that price point, most of our students can’t afford it without help. Every year, about 78% of our degree-seeking students qualify for some form of grant aid – an indicator of their financial need. The Free College program leverages significant federal aid. Since the fall of 2024, we have seen a 42% increase in the number of Pell recipients.

If Free College doesn’t continue, fewer high school graduates will enroll. That’s clear. And that’s a shame, because those students deserve the opportunity to learn a skill, and they’re absolutely capable and ready to learn. Our Free College students are just as successful academically as our other students.

Free College is also something that will make the state competitive and more livable. We are part of a nationwide movement in offering some form of free community college tuition – Massachusetts became the 37th state with free college just a few months ago. It has also led to renewed ties between educational organizations across the state, including the University of Maine System, FAME, Educate Maine, high schools, homeschoolers, and adult education centers, all working together to make sure young people know about this fantastic opportunity. It has been a powerful movement.

I urge you to continue this program. Together we will continue to change lives for our students and their families - inspiring their cousins and little brothers and sisters who see their older siblings go to college.

Specifically, we ask that you include the \$12.5 million in each FY26 and FY27 as well as the \$7.3 million from the original version of LD 209—the supplemental budget – the \$7.3 million we need to fulfill the promise already made.

We also ask you to approve the language in part EEEE. The language does three important things:

- First, it repeals outdated and never used language in 20-A MRSA c.431 §12723 that was enacted as the legislature left Augusta in 2020 when COVID shut down the session. This language was submitted to provide MCCS the statutory authority, if needed, to waive tuition. This language only serves to confuse people looking for our current free college program’s statutory language.

- The second section of EEEE enshrines Maine Free College eligibility in Maine's statute and creates an ongoing program. This language is substantially similar to the current language and maintains the eligibility requirements currently in unallocated language from the last budget.
- The third section of EEEE requires MCCS to prepare an annual report for your committees.

### **Base Budget:**

We can't offer any of our programs without our faculty, adjunct faculty, and staff. As you know, most of our baseline budget - over 70% - goes to personnel and associated costs that increase each year. Our colleges and their employees are not immune to inflationary pressures, and we need to compensate our employees adequately. Like all Maine families and businesses, we also have rising energy, food and other costs. We need to compensate our employees fairly and competitively in order to recruit and retain the people who are at the heart of our operations. The 4% increase in our base budget included here will help us manage these costs.

This budget supports more than just our Free College students. Altogether, we serve more than 33,000 individuals a year through degree and certificate programs, customized short-term workforce training, and credit and non-credit offerings. These students are older, come from all walks of life, with varying levels of education and work experience – but they are all looking to learn something to improve their life. Maybe they're switching careers, or moving into management, or turning an hourly job into a salaried career position. These numbers we're analyzing here today represent real people, across the state, looking for a better life. And it is the state's partnership and financial support that allows us to educate tomorrow's workforce in critical, innovative, and high-demand fields that sustain and strengthen the fabric of our entire society.

### **Paid Family Medical Leave:**

When the PFML legislation passed, the legislature allocated funds to cover the state share of the costs. However, no funds were allocated to Maine's public institutions of higher education. As you may know, most of our employees are covered by collective bargaining agreements. When Maine's PFML program went into effect most of those units had already agreed to their contracts. Although we assume that PFML employee share of premiums will become a negotiated item going forward, we do not feel it appropriate or feasible to reopen those agreements at this time. We respectfully ask that you not only include the FY26 and FY27 funds itemized in the budget, but that you also include the \$209,000 from the supplemental budget.

We are laser-focused on giving all our students – whether they are with us for a single two-week heat pump installer class or a two-year nursing degree – the very best affordable and relevant education possible, so they can go on to build better lives and support their communities and families. Because our mission is to train Maine's workforce for the jobs out there right now. However, to continue to serve the State, honor our employees and meet our mission, we need support from you. We need your continued commitment to Maine's students. We need you to support us, the University and Maine Maritime Academy. We are the key to Maine's future prosperity.

# Eight pathways. Infinite possibilities.

	CM	EM	KV	SM	WC	YC
<b>Arts, Humanities, Digital Media, and Communication</b>						
Communications & New Media				A		
Digital Graphic Design		A/C				
Digital Media						A
General Studies	A*		A			
Graphic Design	A					
Liberal Studies	A*	A*	A*	A*	A*	A*
• Liberal Studies - Art				A		
• Liberal Studies - Economic & Public Policy	A					
• Liberal Studies - English	A			A		
• Liberal Studies - History	A					
• Liberal Studies - Music				A		
• Liberal Studies - Philosophy	A					
• Liberal Studies - Political Science	A					

	CM	EM	KV	SM	WC	YC
<b>Business and Hospitality</b>						
Accounting	A*		A*	A*		A*
Business Administration/Management	A*/C*	A*	A*/C*	A*	A*	A*
• Banking & Finance	A					
• Career Option		A				
• Entrepreneurship				C*		C*
• Entrepreneurship & Small Business	A					
• Finance						A*
• Financial Planning						C*
• Human Resources	A					
• International Commerce					A	
• Nonprofit	A					
• Small Business Development/Management		C				C*
• Sports Management				A		
Business Administration Transfer	A					
Business Administration Transfer - Sports Management	A		A			
Career Studies - Business				A		
Culinary Arts	A/C	A	A		A	
• Cooking Skills			C			
Food Service Specialist		C				
Hospitality Management				A		
Office Assistant				C*		
Outdoor Leadership					A/C	
Restaurant & Food Service Management		A				
Restaurant Management	A					

	CM	EM	KV	SM	WC	YC
<b>Computer Science and Information Technology</b>						
Computer Science				A		
Computer Technology	A				A	
• Coding		A/C/C+				
• Networking		A/C				
Cyber Security				A		
Cyber Security - Digital Forensics	A					
Information Technology				A		A*
Network Administration & Cybersecurity				A/C		
Networked Systems Technology & Security						C*
Web Development						C

	CM	EM	KV	SM	WC	YC
<b>Education, Human Services, and Social and Behavioral Sciences</b>						
Alcohol & Drug Counselor						C
Behavioral Health Studies						A*
Community Mental Health						C*
Early Childhood Education	A	A	A*	A/C	A/C	A/C
Education	A				A/C+	A*
• Career and Technical Education			C			
• Elementary Education			A			
• Secondary Education			A			
Forensic Social Work						A*
Human Services	A*/C*	A/C			A/C	A*
• Substance Use and Recovery						C*
Justice Studies	A*					
Leadership						C*
Liberal Studies - History					A	
Liberal Studies - Political Science					A	
Liberal Studies - Psychology					A	
Liberal Studies - Social Work					A	
Mental Health			A*/C*			
Outdoor Leadership - Adventure Therapy					A	
Psychology	A*		A*			
Social Science	A*/C*					
Substance Abuse Rehabilitation Technician		C				

	CM	EM	KV	SM	WC	YC
<b>Health Sciences</b>						
Advanced Emergency Care			C			
Advanced Emergency Medical Technician				C		
Allied Health				C		
Animal Care and Management						A
Cardiovascular Technology					A/C+	
Career Studies - Health Science Pathway		A				
Community Paramedicine				A/C/C+		
Emergency Medical Services/Paramedicine		A/C	A	A/C	A	
Health Information Management			A*			
Health Occupations						C
Health Sciences			C		A	
Health Studies						A/C
Licensed Practical Nursing				C	C	
Medical Assisting		A/C	A/C	A/C	A/C	A
Medical Coding/Electronic Health Records	A*/C*	C+	C*	C*		
Medical Office Technology						C
• Health Care Secretary			C			
Nursing	A	A	A	A	A	A
Nutrition and Dietetics					A	
Occupational Therapy Assistant			A			
Phlebotomy			C			C
Physical Fitness Specialist	A					
Physical Therapist Assistant			A			
Radiologic Technology/Medical Radiography		A/C+	A		A	
Respiratory Therapy Technology			A		A	
Surgical Technology		A			A	
Veterinary Assistant						C
Veterinary Technology						A

You can learn more about MCCS programs of study at [mccs.me.edu/programs](http://mccs.me.edu/programs).

	CM	EM	KV	NM	SM	WC	YC
<b>Industrial Technology and Transportation</b>							
Air Conditioning & Refrigeration					C		
Applied Electronics & Computer Technology			A/C				
Aquaculture						A	
Architectural & Engineering Design					A		A
• Marine Design					C		
Automotive Collision Repair				A/C			
Automotive Technology	A	A		A/C	A	C	
• Basic Systems		C					
• Chassis Systems					C		
• Ford ASSET	A						
• Powertrain Systems					C		
Building Construction Technology	A/C	A/C		C	A/C		
Building Construction Technology -- Job Site Track	A						
Career Studies	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
CNC Machine Operator					C		
Computer Aided Design Technology							C
Computer Aided Machining				C			
Diesel & Automotive Engine Overhaul						C	
Diesel Hydraulics Technology				A/C			
Diesel, Truck, & Heavy Equipment		A					
• Heavy Truck & Equipment Systems		C					
Electrical Construction & Maintenance				A/C			
Electrical Engineering Technology					A		
Electrical Lineworker Technology			C				
Electrical/Electricians Technology		C	A/C		C		C
Electromechanical Technology	A/C						
Facilities Maintenance & Management	A						
Fine Woodworking & Cabinet Making		A/C					
Heating			C	C	C	C	
Heating, Air Conditioning & Refrigeration	A/C	A			A		
• Refrigeration		C					
Heavy Equipment Maintenance						C	
Heavy Equipment Operation						C	
Horticulture					A		
Major Collision Repair & Refinishing				C			
Mechanical Technology						A/C	
• Passenger Vehicle Service						A	
Metal Fabrication	A						
Multi-Axis Machining					C+		
Plumbing		C	C	C	C		
Plumbing & Heating	A/C		A	A	A		
Powersports Equipment/Small Engine Technician						C	
Precision Machining Technology	A/C/C+		C		A		
• CNC Machining Operator							
• Computer-Aided Machining				C			
• Operators Certificate			C				
Residential & Commercial Electricity						D	
Trade & Technical Occupations (for Registered Apprenticeship)		A	A	A	A	A	A
Water Treatment Technology				A	A/C <sup>1</sup>		
• Drinking Water				C	C <sup>1</sup>		
• Wastewater				C	C <sup>1</sup>		
Welding Technology		A/C	C	C		C	
Wind Power Technology				C			

	CM	EM	KV	SM	WC	YC
<b>Public Safety</b>						
Advanced Emergency Care			C			
Advanced Emergency Medical Technician				C		
Community Paramedicine			A/C/C+			
Criminal Justice	A*	A			A	A*
Conservation Law Enforcement	A/C				A	
Corrections/Probation		C			A*/C*	
Emergency Medical Services/Paramedicine		A/C	A/C	A/C	A	
Fire Science Technology		A/C			A/C	
Forensic Science	A					
Legal Studies						A
Police Operations	C+					

	CM	EM	KV	SM	WC	YC
<b>Sciences, Engineering, and Mathematics</b>						
Architectural Studies	A					
Architectural & Engineering Design				A		A
Biological/Life Science	A		A			
Biotechnology				A		
Electrical & Automation Technology		A				
Electromechanical Instrumentation Technology					A	
Exercise Science	A					
Liberal Studies - Mathematics				A		
Liberal Studies - Science				A		
Marine Science				A		
Mechanical Drafting & Design						C
Pre-Engineering				A		
Production Technology						A*/C*

- CM** Central Maine Community College
- EM** Eastern Maine Community College
- KV** Kennebec Valley Community College
- NM** Northern Maine Community College
- SM** Southern Maine Community College
- WC** Washington County Community College
- YC** York County Community College

- A** = Associate Degree
- C** = Certificate
- D** = Diploma
- C+** = Advanced Certificate

Admissions officers at each of the colleges are available to answer questions and help you figure out your next steps.

Contact information is available at [mccs.me.edu/apply](http://mccs.me.edu/apply) or email [MCCSinfo@maineccc.edu](mailto:MCCSinfo@maineccc.edu)

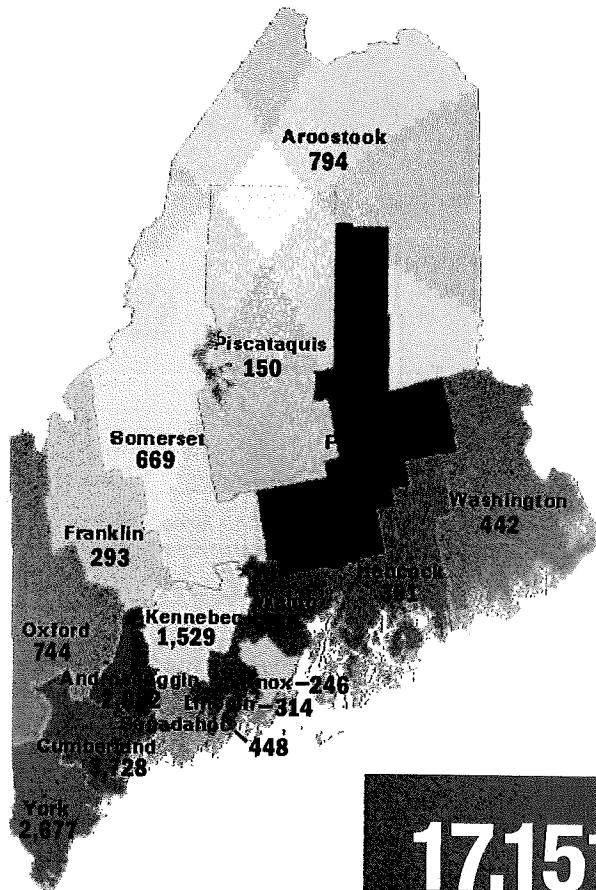
<sup>1</sup> NMCC program offered at SMCC.

\* Also available 100% online.

Programs are subject to change without notice. Students interested in a particular program of study are strongly encouraged to contact the admissions office at the relevant community college for more detail about the program and its degree options.

Maine's community colleges are accredited by The New England Commission of Higher Education.

## Where they are from



**17,151**  
Students have  
enrolled between  
fall 2022 and  
fall 2024.

**The Free College Scholarship is changing lives. For many students it means the difference between staying in college and not dropping out. For others it means a debt-free start to a four-year education and beyond. For Maine, it means an educated workforce.**

The Free College program started in early 2022. It covers 100% of community college tuition and fees for recent high school graduates who fill out a FAFSA, accept federal and state grant aid, pursue a degree or certificate, and live in Maine while enrolled. The state funded the program with an initial \$20 million for students who graduated high school in 2020 through 2023, and a subsequent \$15 million investment to expand the program to graduates from 2024-25. A proposal to make Free College permanent is in Governor Mills' biennial budget proposal released January 10, 2025.

## How it's going

- ▶ A higher percentage of men are enrolling in Free College, and the Free College students' retention rate is the same as for non-Free College students.
- ▶ Free College students are enrolling in greater numbers in career and technical programs.
- ▶ Higher enrollment means more skilled graduates going into Maine's workforce or transferring to a four-year college. MCCS transfers to the University of Maine System were up 30% in fall 2024.
- ▶ It's led to a transformative new system-to-system Transfer ME agreement with the University of Maine System, guaranteeing a hassle-free direct admission process for MCCS students in certain programs - with no application or fees needed.

## Chloe Kirschmann

### AUTOMOTIVE COLLISION REPAIR

The Free College scholarship was just the ticket for Chloe Kirschmann.

After getting some bodywork experience at Caribou Tech Center and taking a year off after high school, she was convinced by a former instructor and the Free College program to enroll at NMCC in the automotive collision repair program.

She said the program has taught her about welding and electricity and "things you didn't even realize happen while you drive a car." Chloe says she enjoys working with something broken and making it look new again.

Down the road, she plans to work in a local body shop: "You just have to do it."





## 1 Have A High School Diploma

(or equivalent) from 2022, 2023, 2024, or 2025.



## 2 Enroll

Pursue a degree or certificate program at least part time during the following time frames:

- 2022 grads:** No later than Fall 2024, Spring 2025, or Summer 2025
- 2023 grads:** No later than Fall 2025, Spring 2026, or Summer 2026
- 2024 grads:** No later than Fall 2026, Spring 2027, or Summer 2027
- 2025 grads:** No later than Fall 2027, Spring 2028, or Summer 2028



## 3 File the FAFSA

File online at [studentaid.gov/FAFSA](http://studentaid.gov/FAFSA).  
Please note: If you aren't eligible or can't complete the FAFSA, contact the colleges' Financial Aid Office. All federal and state aid is applied before the Free College Scholarship.



## 4 Live in Maine

while enrolled



## 5 Complete Your Certificate or Degree

You can access the scholarship for up to 200% of the program completion time. (i.e. if your program takes two years, you have up to four years to complete it.)  
**Part time is okay!**



### Please note:

- You cannot earn more than one associate degree under the Free College Scholarship.
- You can use the Free College Scholarship to get two stacked, one-year certificates or a certificate and an associate degree in the following scenarios:
  - If the two certificates are stackable. (Ex. Heating certificate, Plumbing certificate)
  - If the certificate leads to the associate degree. (Ex. Automotive Chassis certificate + Automotive Technology degree)
  - If the two certificates are directly related. (Ex. Construction Technology certificate and Electrician Technology certificate)

Learn More!



## What students are studying



## What students are saying

Education major Kaiden Nadeau says the Free College scholarship lets her focus on being a full-time student "without feeling extremely overloaded."

"I will forever be grateful," said Kaiden, who plans to transfer to a university. "This takes an immense amount of pressure off both me and my parents. This scholarship allows students to focus on their education stress-free of cost."

- Kaiden Nadeau, YCCC

"The benefits from the free college tuition has no limits," said Katahdin Javner, an EMCC business major graduate. "I know it has motivated students that would have not continued their education to go on and accomplish more than they could ever imagine - because that was me. The greatest investment for a community is an investment into the education of the people, the benefits will most certainly outweigh the costs."

- Katahdin Javner, EMCC



**Chloe Harvey, NMCC**

Chloe Harvey of Waldoboro comes from a family of lobsterman - it's what she expected to do, too. But a CTE automotive class, the encouragement of a CTE instructor, and the Free College scholarship led her to enroll in the automotive collision repair program at Northern Maine Community College.



"I was very against going to college," she says, looking back to her high school years. "My family wanted me to go, but no one else in my family had gone. But I decided to change it up and go - and I really liked it. It was definitely the best thing I've ever done," she said. **"Free college made a difference, it really did."**

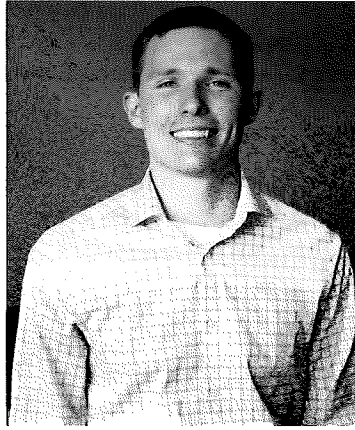
Chloe graduated in 2023 and now works at Twisted Iron Customs in Edgecomb, doing custom paint work on everything from hot rods to motorcycles. "I love it here, it's a great crew," she said.



“The Maine Free College scholarship has been a **life-changing opportunity** for me. Without it, I would have attended a private four-year institution and taken on a significant financial burden. Instead, I'm just three months away from completing my nursing degree at CMCC. This scholarship has allowed me to **focus on my education and career goals**, and I am excited to continue my journey by transferring to UMaine Augusta or UMaine Fort Kent to complete my Bachelor of Science in Nursing. This program has made higher education accessible and affordable, setting me up for long-term success in healthcare.

- Madisyn Turcotte, Auburn

“The benefits from the free college tuition has no limits. I know it has **motivated students** that would have not continued their education to go on and accomplish more than they could ever imagine - because that was me. The greatest investment for a community is an **investment into the education of the**



- Katahdin Javner, EMCC

**people**, the benefits will most certainly outweigh the costs.”

“The Free College scholarship **removed the financial barriers** that I was worrying would hold me back from pursuing my degree in cybersecurity & digital forensics. As a young woman in a non-traditional field, I have found incredible support and encouragement at Central Maine Community College to follow my passion for technology. This scholarship gave me the chance to **focus on my education and future career.**



- J.T. Pound, Durham, ME

“I chose CMCC because the Free College scholarship made it **possible for me to pursue my dream** of earning an HVAC-R degree without worrying about the financial burden. This opportunity has set me on the path to continue my education with a business degree so I can one day start my own HVAC business right here in Maine. CMCC has not only made college affordable but has given me the tools to turn my goals into reality.



- Ava Smith, Casco

“I will be forever **grateful**. This takes an immense pressure off both me and my parents. This scholarship allows students to focus on their education **stress-free** of cost.

- Kaiden Nadeau, YCCC education major



**Maine Community  
College System**

**2024-2025 Fact Sheet**

## Who We Are

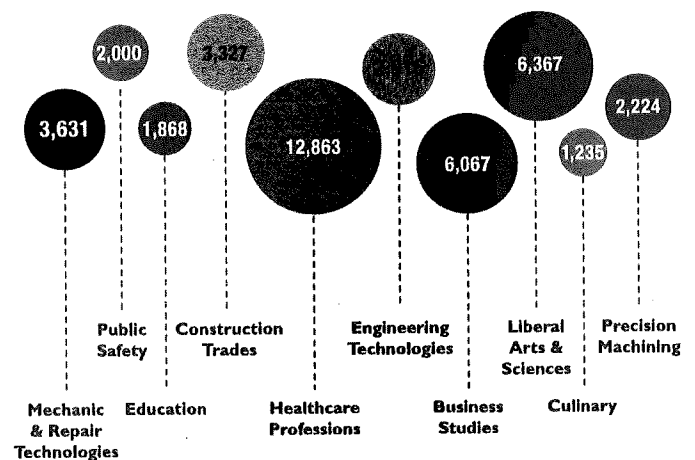
Maine's seven community colleges are the smart and affordable choice for lifelong learning in Maine serving more than 33,000 people a year.

- We're welcoming: Our community includes students in two-year associate degree and one-year certificate programs, short-term workforce training, early college programs, advanced certificates, and specialized skills training.
- We're affordable: Maine's community colleges have the lowest tuition and fees in New England, and generous scholarships and aid.
- We're vibrant: On-campus housing is available along with sports, clubs, athletic facilities, and campus events.
- We're practical: High-tech facilities mean students learn on equipment they'll use on the job.

## Who We Serve

- 21,385 students enrolled in credit courses in fall 2024.
- 96% of incoming degree-seeking students are Maine residents.
- 78% of degree-seeking students get some form of grant aid. For 77% of degree-seeking students, grant aid covers the full cost of tuition and fees.
- 65% of all students attend part time.
- 83% of degree-seeking students are enrolled in career and occupational programs.

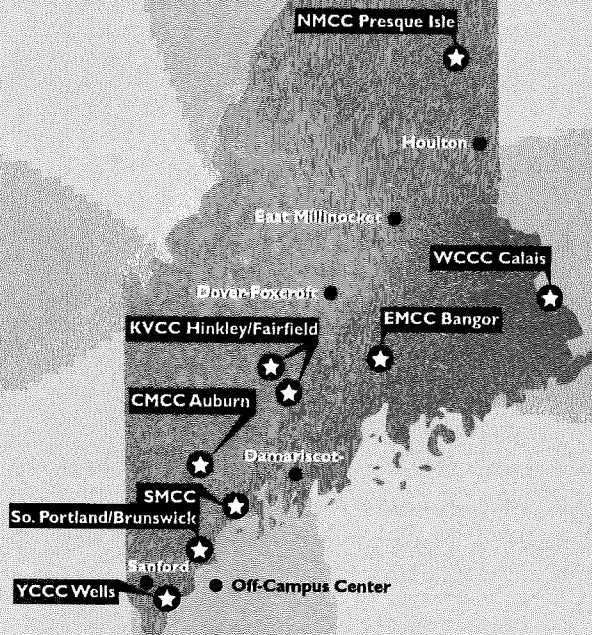
**MCCS has awarded 50,468 college credentials since 2003. These skilled workers form the bedrock of the Maine economy.**



## Serving All Ages and Aspirations

- The average age of degree-seeking students is 24. 30 percent are adult learners age 25 or older.
- In 2023-2024, 7,087 Maine high-school students earned free college credits through our early college programs.
- 54% of new, degree-seeking students are recent high school graduates.
- Under the new Transfer ME program, MCCS graduates in certain programs are guaranteed admission at one or more University of Maine System colleges. In fall 2023, 536 MCCS alumni enrolled in the UMaine System. A similar agreement with private colleges in Maine guarantees admission to College of the Atlantic, Husson University, St. Joseph's College of Maine, Thomas College, Unity Environmental University, and the University of New England.

## Our Locations



The seven community colleges and their off-campus centers are within 25 miles of 94% of Maine's population.

**Maine's community colleges offer the lowest tuition in New England**

Free for many. Affordable for all.  
**\$96 per credit hour**

*The average cost for a full-time student \$4,156 a year in tuition & fees.*

*High school graduates from Classes of 2022-2025 qualify for a Free College Scholarship that pays 100% of tuition and mandatory fees.*

*Over \$101 million in grant aid is awarded each year.*

*In 2023-2024, the community colleges served more than 33,000 individuals — through degree programs, customized training, and credit and non-credit offerings.*

## Building a Skilled Workforce for Maine

- In addition to degrees and certificates, we've vastly expanded our short-term workforce training programs. Get the skills and training you need — at low- or no-cost — for the job you want in just weeks or months.
- Since 2022, we've trained more than 26,000 short-term workforce students, and we're on track to train another 70,500 by 2030.
- Our most popular programs are in health care, business, and the trades, but there are short-term programs in all industry sectors. Among the classes: commercial driving, marine design, logging operations, CNC machine operator, e-vehicle repair, heat pump installation, medical assistant, electrician, pharmacy technician, Yamaha outboard motor repair, and welding.
- Short-term workforce training is coordinated by our Harold Alfond Center for the Advancement of Maine's Workforce, with training delivered on-campus, online, at job sites, or at other locations across the state.
- Some programs include stipends and short-term housing options!

## Free College Facts

- High school graduates from 2022-2025 qualify for a Free College Scholarship that covers 100% of tuition and mandatory fees after state and federal grant aid has been applied. No paperwork needed, the scholarship is automatically applied for graduates in qualifying years.
- The Free College Scholarship has encouraged more male students to enroll in college.
- A total of 17,151 free-college eligible students have enrolled, many who previously thought they could never afford to go to college.
- 91% of Free College Scholarship recipients are pursuing associate degrees.



**Maine Community College System**

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