

COLLEGE BOUND

Spring 2018



Meet Kusow from the University of Everyone

University of Southern Maine has rich mix of students

SPECIAL TO COLLEGE BOUND
from USM

The University of Southern Maine (USM) prides itself in its rich mix of students. It's why we're called the University of Everyone. We are the university of high achievers, the first-in-the-family to attend college, the New Mainer, the working adult, and those who have served our nation.

We're also the university of students who want to make a difference in their community and in the world, like it is for Kusow Aden.

Kusow's parents fled Somalia's civil war to a Kenyan refugee camp where Kusow was born and spent his early years.

It was in that refugee camp where Kusow witnessed the caring and support of United Nations personnel, instilling in him a desire to help people in need, especially children.

"I want to offer help, just like how we offered help at the camps," Kusow said. "They made us feel like we were home."

Today, Lewiston is his home.

Upon his family's arrival in Maine, Kusow was supported at a local agency called Tree Street Youth. Later, he began to support other children there.

After graduating from high school, Kusow enrolled at a private college. But after one year of mounting student debt, Kusow chose to transfer to USM, a place he could afford without taking out loans.

Kusow chose to attend classes on USM's Lewiston-Auburn campus where he could remain close to home and continue to mentor kids at Tree Street Youth. At USM, he chose to major in Social and Behavioral Sciences, where the content and subject matter on developmental stages of children would help him with his work with young people.

"The classes can be challenging and intensive, but there's always a take back that helps me with what I want to do in my life," Kusow said.

And what does he want to do? Kusow Aden wishes to continue to work with children, give back to his community and, someday, perhaps, work for the UN.

We have every reason to believe he will.

Every USM student story, like Kusow's, is both unique and their own, but there are several themes you see run through all of them.

First, they appreciate USM's academic excellence, with faculty combining their expertise in their respective fields with a true caring for each and every student.

Secondly, their USM education begins in the classroom, but quickly extends outside its walls. No matter one's field of study, USM provides internships, clinicals and authentic hand-on learning in every major.



And with its three campuses in Portland, Gorham and Lewiston situated in the economic and cultural heart of northern New England, the University of Southern Maine has a great advantage over most schools in being able to place students in businesses of every size, hospitals, social service agencies, nonprofits, performance venues and even sports teams. These opportunities give USM students a true leg up in launching their careers.

Thirdly, they can afford USM. Between our low public tuition and outstanding financial aid packages, students receive a terrific education at a far lower cost than most other schools.

In fact, USM is one of the few schools in the nation where student debt has actually gone down.

And finally, our students fit in and all are welcome, regardless of age, background or experience. USM is the most diverse campus in Maine and students benefit from learning with each other and from each other. We are, after all, the University of Everyone.

USM contributed photos

Kusow Aden, right and below, attends classes on USM's Lewiston-Auburn campus where he could remain close to home and continue to mentor kids at Tree Street Youth, an organization that helped him when he and his family moved here from Somalia.



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usm.maine.edu *welcome*

3 tips to finding the right graduate program

Graduate school allows college students the chance to intensify their studies as they pursue advanced degrees. Many professions require advanced degrees, but students may enroll in graduate school for various reasons, including their own intellectual curiosity and the chance to improve their earning potential.

Choosing a graduate program is an important decision that can impact students' career prospects and financial futures. According to Peterson's Real Guide to Colleges and Universities, the average annual tuition for a graduate program at a public university is \$30,000, while graduate students at private universities can expect to pay nearly \$40,000 each year. Such figures illustrate just how important it is for prospective graduate students to find the right schools for them.



1. Conduct exhaustive research.

Because the cost is so substantial, students should be extra diligent when researching potential grad schools. Gather as much information about each school as possible, even contacting department heads and/or professors to learn if a given program is best for you. Graduate programs tend to be specialized, so make sure each school you're considering offers exactly what you're seeking. For example, graduate programs in history may specialize in a particular period of history. As a result, students who want to pursue graduate degrees in history must find the program that allows them to study the period that most interests them. Finding such programs requires extensive research, so students must afford themselves ample time.



2. Speak to current students and recent graduates.

Current students and recent graduates can provide a unique perspective that prospective grad students won't get from brochures or online research, no matter how exhaustive that research might be. Encourage students and recent grads to be candid, asking them about their experiences as grad students and, for recent grads, how they fared in the job market after earning their degrees. Don't discount the latter, as grad school is an investment of time, energy and money, and that should lead to professional fulfillment upon graduating.



3. Be realistic about your finances.

While many people enroll in graduate programs to improve their earning potential, some students may not enjoy that benefit. The cost of grad school varies depending on the school and the program, but prospective grad students may want to change their plans if the cost of obtaining an advanced degree will greatly affect their financial freedom for years to come. Students worried about their post-grad school earning potential may want to choose less expensive programs so they can still pursue their degrees without mortgaging their financial futures.

Graduate school requires a substantial investment of time, energy and money. Prospective grad students should do everything possible to ensure they invest in the grad school that best suits their particular needs.

Online education works for busy Mainers

UMA leaders explain the process

SPECIAL TO COLLEGE BOUND
From UMA

How can you take college courses or earn a degree while working and raising a family? It's a balancing act, but distance education worked for nearly 24,000 Mainers who took at least one course at a distance in the fall of 2015.

According to the 2017 Digital Learning Compass report (Babson Survey Research Group), that number represents 33 percent of enrolled students in Maine, which is higher than the national average of 29.7 percent.

Distance education uses one or more technologies to deliver instruction to students who are separated from their instructor, and to support substantive interaction between the students and instructor synchronously or asynchronously.

Technologies used for instruction may include Internet; one-way and two-way transmissions through open broadcasts, closed circuit, cable, microwave, broadband lines, fiber optics, satellite or wireless communication devices; audio conferencing and video cassette.

The University of Maine at Augusta (UMA) has been a leader in providing access to undergraduate distance education for Mainers since 1965.



With campuses in Augusta and Bangor, eight Centers from Saco to Houlton, more than 30 additional sites where students can obtain courses, and many programs available completely online, UMA is uniquely equipped to support distance learning.

As reported by the 2017 Digital Learning Compass report, UMA enrolled more than 3,200 undergraduate students into distance programs in 2015, more than any other Maine institution. In the fall of 2017, UMA delivered 23,274 credit hours of distance education.

Learning online accommodates family time, varied work schedules and active lives.

Answering these five questions will help you determine if distance learning is right for you:

1. Do you enjoy reading, learning new things and meeting new people? Online courses require a significant amount of reading, studying and interaction.

2. Are you disciplined and committed? Good time management is critical and at times, you may have to choose to complete an assignment over other activities.

3. Do you have regular access to a computer with an Internet connection? It could be at home, at work, or at the public library.

4. Can you communicate effectively in writing? Completing coursework at a distance requires a fair amount of writing.

5. How will you finance your education?

Options include federal financial aid, scholarships, your employer's tuition reimbursement plan and personal savings.

Most adult students consider several schools before finalizing their selection. Research the following with respect to any colleges or universities you are considering:

1. Accreditation. Accreditation is critical because it provides an indication of an institution's reputation and quality. General accreditation applies to an institution in entirety and is awarded by one of six regional accrediting agencies.

2. Program Offerings. You may need a degree to remain competitive in your job, to earn a promotion or to remain licensed. You may simply want the fulfillment that comes from earning your degree. In any case, be sure the institution you choose offers a degree program that fits your needs.

3. Experience with distance learning. The length of time an institution has offered distance education is an important indicator of how much time the school has had to develop policies and procedures that work well for distance students.

4. Credit transfer. Most institutions will provide credit for previous college courses, and some will also award credit for work experience or other professional training.

5. Tuition and fees. When considering your costs, be sure to factor in your savings from not driving to class or paying for child/elder care, and the extra family time gained by learning at home.

Ask these five questions of yourself and investigate these five areas of a potential school and you will be more successful in your pursuit for the right fit.

UMA is committed to transforming the lives of students of every age and background throughout Maine, and beyond, with access to distance education, 10 locations from Saco to Houlton and dedicated student support. Learn more at uma.edu.

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Simple ways to cut college costs

The cost of college tuition continues to increase, and college graduates are feeling the burn of that trend when the time comes to begin repaying their student loans.

According to an analysis from higher education expert Mark Kantrowitz, publisher of Cappex, an online resource for students seeking college scholarships, members of the class of 2016 graduated with an average student loan debt of just over \$37,000. That projection, which was based on federal student loan data and variables including tuition inflation, would be an all-time high. Things are not much better in Canada, where the 2015 Graduating Student Survey by the Canadian University Survey Consortium estimated the average member of the class of 2015 graduated with \$27,000 in debt.

Though many prospective college students are beginning to question if college degrees are worth taking on the kind of debt many students must take on to continue their educations after high school, statistics still indicate that college graduates have far greater lifetime earning potential than men and women who enter the professional arena with only high school diplomas.

So what can prospective college students do to avoid graduating without tens of thousands of dollars in debt? The answer might not be so difficult.



Apply to tuition-free schools. Many students and parents might be surprised to learn that there are several tuition-free schools. Admittance to these schools is competitive, but students considering equally competitive, high-tuition alternatives might make strong candidates for admission to tuition-free schools.

Apply to fixed-tuition schools. If tuition-free schools are not an option, students can save money by applying for admittance to fixed-tuition schools. Such schools guarantee that the tuition students pay in their freshman year will not increase during the ensuing three years. (Note: Tuition may increase if a student

needs a fifth year of schooling.) That can lead to considerable savings, as many schools' tuitions increase dramatically in just four years.

Begin at a two-year college. Two-year colleges typically charge considerably lower tuitions than four-year colleges and universities. Students who want to save money may benefit by enrolling in a two-year college out of high school and getting all of their prerequisite courses out of the way at a more budget-friendly cost. When considering this option, make sure credits at the two-year college fully transfer to the four-year school students hope to enroll in after earning their associate's degrees.

Remain in-state for undergraduate degrees. In-state tuition at public universities remains a considerable bargain over out-of-state tuition or tuition at private universities. Students planning to do postgraduate work might benefit by enrolling in in-state public universities and saving their money to finance their postgraduate educations. Students who hope to attend a public university in a state that borders their home state may be eligible for a border waiver, which grants them in-state tuition even though they attended high school outside of the state.

Attending college has never been more expensive, but students and their parents can explore various options that can help reduce the cost of college tuition.

Things to know about returning to school

Upon taking inventory of their lives at the start of a new year, some people entertain thoughts of returning to school.

Adults who decide to return to school after a long layoff are following a popular path. According to the education resource Education Corner, a growing number of career colleges and vocational training schools now offer bachelor's and graduate degree programs geared toward working adults.

People return to school for various reasons, including the chance to learn new skills or further develop their existing skills. Some return to school because they are changing careers, while others may have lost a job or desire a promotion and feel

that attaining a higher level of education or new skills can make reaching that goal more likely.

Adults who hope to return to school might be surprised to learn that the educational landscape has changed considerably since they were last in a classroom.

- College students are no longer just young men and women who begin pursuing degrees right out of high school. In fact, the number of adults returning to the classroom has increased considerably, often making younger students the exception rather than the rule, says the college financial planner Straighter Line. According to the U.S. Department of Education, college students

25 years or older comprise 40 percent of all students enrolled in college.

- Adults who are thinking about returning to school are urged to fill out the free applications for student aid to see if they qualify. Grants and scholarships may be available, and some workers find that employers may match funds or offer some assistance to finance job training courses.

- Many schools now offer online courses that make it easier for working adults to pursue their degrees.

Many working adults are returning to school to pursue new or advanced degrees, as more colleges and universities are facilitating such pursuits.



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Take a course in dorm safety

College students have a few different living options at their disposal, but many opt for dormitory living, as it is one of the more convenient and popular boarding options, particularly for out-of-town students. Thousands of post-secondary students pack up their belongings and move away from home in the pursuit of an education, and parents want to do what they can to ensure their college-aged kids are safe.

For many students, college represents the first time they will live anywhere other than the homes they grew up in. Dorm life can be an exciting adventure, but it can also be one that may open new college students up to inherently risky situations.

While students should look forward to fun and excitement at school, it's also important for them to be prepared for what lies ahead at college and in dorm life — and to take the proper safety precautions.

Fall in with a trustworthy group of dorm friends. Friends can be informed of your schedule for both classes and work, so they are aware of where you are supposed to be at certain times of the day. If something is amiss, these friends can alert authorities or investigate your whereabouts further.

Lock your dorm room door. Always keep the dorm room door locked, and make sure your roommate is on the same page. Locking the door can deter people from entering without your permission and prevent theft.

Keep belongings out of sight. When preparing to move into a dorm, leave heirlooms or expensive jewelry at home. Once you move in, store your more valuable belongings out of sight or in a locked box or safe. Consider getting insurance for dorm belongings, which will protect you in the event of theft.

Travel in groups. When attending parties or other functions, always arrive and leave in a group. This offers extra protection, as assaults and other crimes are less likely to occur when criminals are outnumbered.

Know the evacuation routes. Learn your dorm's evacuation policies. Know where all exits are and how to get out of the building if exits may be blocked. Find out if fire drills or other safety procedures are practiced, and participate in them.

Use the elevator. If there's an elevator, use it. Stairwells are secluded and dark and often provide the perfect opportunity for would-be criminals to take advantage of unsuspecting students.

Use common sense and trust your instincts with regard to dorm safety. Make college memories good ones by emphasizing caution.



Early UMaine programs offered to high school students

Participants earn college credits

SPECIAL TO COLLEGE BOUND
From UMAINE

The University of Maine, the state's premier research university, recognizes the importance of early college programs for Maine high school students aspiring to attend college.

The UMaine Aspirations and Academ-e programs offer an opportunity for high school students to enroll in college courses taught by world-class faculty at the University of Maine.

Through a partnership between the Maine Department of Education and the University of Maine System, tuition is waived for all qualified high school students in Maine for up to 12 college credits per year.

The data is clear: If students of this generation do not get a college education, they are less likely to find a job that pays enough to support themselves and their families. By 2020, more than 65 percent of U.S. jobs will require higher education. Only 42 percent of Mainers hold education and workforce credentials that position this state and its families for success.

How can we increase student access to higher education? This is a question we have been working to answer for our students living in Maine.

In particular, how can the University of Maine help more students earn a college degree? One approach that shows promise

is exposing them to college courses and the college experience while they are still in high school. Early college programs boost students' interest in higher education and give them a head start on course work.

Starting May 14, the University of Maine will offer summer courses through the Aspirations Program suitable for rising high school juniors and seniors. Classes are taught by UMaine faculty and meet general education requirements of the University of Maine System, as well as the majority of colleges nationwide.

Students across the state will benefit from the flexibility and variety of live (in Belfast and Orono) and online college courses offered this summer. Courses are condensed to a six-week format beginning either May 14 or June 25. Starting in September, the UMaine Academ-e and Aspirations programs will offer a variety of online and live classes for qualified students in grades 9–12.

Nationally, the demand for early college programs is increasing rapidly. Taking early college classes at UMaine will enrich a student's high school experience, lower future college debt, preview what it's like to be in college and save money by earning college credit while still in high school. Interested students and parents are encouraged to contact UMaine academic advisor Amy Smith at 338-8004, amy.m.smith@maine.edu, to learn more about the application process.



Free Summer 2018 Courses for Qualified High School Students in Grades 9–12

University of Maine, Orono • UMaine Hutchinson Center, Belfast • Online
umaine.edu/summeruniversity/course-listing



For more information contact:
Amy Smith, Assistant Director for Academic & Student Services
207.338.8004, amy.m.smith@maine.edu

The University of Maine does not discriminate on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, including transgender status and gender expression, national origin, citizenship status, age, disability, genetic information or veteran's status in employment, education, and all other programs and activities. Please contact the Director, Equal Opportunity, 101 N. Stevens Hall, Orono, ME 04469 at 207-581-1226 (voice), TTY 711 (Maine Relay System), equal.opportunity@maine.edu with questions or concerns.

NEACAC provides a resource for professionals

Service opens doors to higher education

The New England Association for College Admission Counseling is the number one resource in New England for college admissions professionals. NEACAC fulfills its mission by developing and providing services, programs and opportunities for members so they can serve and assist students in their transition from secondary to post-secondary education.

The Association aims to lead in shaping the college counseling, admission and enrollment profession by:

- Developing ethical and social responsibility within the profession through the establishment and maintenance of high professional standards;
- Supporting and encouraging collaborative relationships and providing professional development opportunities for all members;
- Advocating for policies that impact the profession at the state, regional and national level and
- Fostering development of equal opportunities for, and access to, post-secondary education for all students, utilizing the collective influence and knowledge of the members.

There will be a NEACAC Spring College Fair from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. on Thursday, May 24 at the Augusta Civic Center, hosted by the University of Maine at Augusta.

New scanning technology at fairs this spring with StriveScan

Earlier this year, we announced the addition of scanning technology for two of our college fairs this spring, partnering with StriveScan to pilot the system at the Merrimack College Fair on Tuesday, May 22nd and the University of Maine, Augusta College Fair on Thursday, May 24th.

NEACAC is covering the cost of StriveScan for all of the institutions participating in these fairs, so we encourage you to try it. Registered institutions will receive an email from StriveScan within the next few weeks with instructions on how to sign up and get started.

StriveScan is used at college fairs around the country, including by Illinois, Missouri, Hawaii, and Pacific Northwest ACACs, along with the Colleges That Change Lives tours, and is quickly growing. College reps use the StriveScan app on their iPhone, Android, or iPad to scan students' barcodes (no other device needed!). Reps can instantly view the

student's profile information and take notes right in the app. After the fair, reps export the student data with one click, instantly, to a CSV Excel file. If you have multiple reps attending from the same institution, both can scan from their own phones.

Students attending the fairs go to the registration page at www.strivefair.com and fill out a quick form on their phone or computer (in advance or at the door). When they sign up, StriveScan sends them a barcode via text message and email. The next day, students receive an email with a report on all of the colleges and representatives they met along with their contact information and social media profiles. For more information, we recommend watching the two-minute intro video at www.strivescan.com.

We hope all institutions participating in these spring fairs will use StriveScan and provide important feedback for future fairs!

The following Schools will be attending the Augusta Fair:

Assumption College	Purdue University
Bates College	Quinnipiac University
Bay Path University	Regis
Bay State College	Rivier University
Beal College	Roanoke College
Bennington College	Rochester Institute of Technology
Bowdoin College	Saint Anselm College
Bryant University	Saint Joseph's College
California State University, Sonoma	Savannah College of Art and Design
Castleton University	Seton Hall University
Central Maine Community College	Simmons College
Champlain College	Southern Maine Community College
Clark University	Southern New Hampshire University
Clarkson University	Southern Vermont College
Colby-Sawyer College	Springfield College, MA
College of the Atlantic	St. Lawrence University
College of St. Joseph	St. Thomas University (Canada)
Columbia College of South Carolina	Stonehill College
Curry College	Suffolk University
Dean College	SUNY Cobleskill
Drew University	Sweet Briar College
Eastern Maine Community & Technical College	Syracuse University
Eckerd College	The College of New Jersey
Elmira College	The Finance Authority of Maine
Elms College	The University of Arizona
Emmanuel College	The University of Scranton
Endicott College	Thomas College
Fisher College	Tuition Break
Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton	Unity College
Florida Institute of Technology	University of Delaware
Franklin Pierce University	University of Maine
Green Mountain College	University of Maine at Augusta
Hampshire College	University of Maine at Farmington
Hartwick College	University of Maine at Fort Kent
High Point University	University of Maine at Machias
Hofstra University	University of Maine at Presque Isle
Husson University	University of Mass.- Dartmouth
Johnson & Wales University	University of Massachusetts Lowell
Keene State College	University of New Brunswick
Kennebec Valley Community College	University of New England
Lasell College	University of New Hampshire
Lesley University	University of New Haven
Maine College of Health Professions	University of Pittsburgh
Maine Maritime Academy	University of Rhode Island
MCPHS University	University of Rochester
Merrimack College	University of Southern Maine
Mount Allison University (Canada)	University of Tampa
New England College	Vermont Tech
New England School of Photography	Washington County Community College
Nichols College	Wellesley College
Northern Maine Community College	Wells College
Northern Vermont University	Wentworth Institute of Technology
Penn State University	Westfield State University
Plymouth State University	Wheaton College Massachusetts
	Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI)
	Xavier University (OH)
	List as of May 2

Get ready for the College Fair!

Students: Go to www.strivefair.com and register so you can easily provide your information to the colleges you meet at the fair.

When you register, you get a barcode that colleges can scan at the fair to get your information.

The colleges you're interested in will start sending you information about their school, the application process, financial aid and important deadlines.

Step 1 Go to www.StriveFair.com and fill out the form to get a barcode.

We'll send you a reminder with your barcode again two hours before the fair.

Step 2 At the fair, show this barcode to colleges. They'll scan it and get your information.

After the Fair

The next day, you'll get a report with information about all of the colleges that scanned you. You'll also start receiving information directly from the colleges.

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Maine Technical Education Center seeks high school grads

Careers in heating and cooling systems available

SPECIAL TO COLLEGE BOUND
from *Maine Technical Education Center*

For students who have decided that a traditional four-year college isn't right for them, the Maine Technical Education Center (MTEC) offers an alternative path to a good-paying job with potential to grow into a long, stable career.

MTEC's courses are concentrated, direct, hands-on and designed to provide students with the best HVAC-R training to prepare them to confidently enter the workforce and secure employment quickly.

With nearly all Maine businesses and homes relying on heating and cooling systems, there is an abundance of employment opportunities for MTEC graduates. And our 95 percent job placement rating has most students employed before they even graduate.

What is HVAC-R?

HVAC-R stands for Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration. On average, HVAC-R is responsible for up to 50 percent of annual energy consumption in both residential and commercial properties. Typical energy sources used by the HVAC-R industry are oil, propane, natural gas, bioheat, solar and geothermal. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the HVAC-R industry is projected

to grow 21 percent by 2022— well above the national average for other trades.

Benefits of an MTEC education:

- **Exclusive Member Network:** MTEC is owned and operated by more than 300 Maine and New England member companies who help to design educational programs, donate equipment and hire graduates from the school they themselves fund.

- **No Filler Courses:** There is no need to take general education classes such as mathematics or English. When enrolled at MTEC, students focus only on the certifications they wish to obtain.

- **Hands-on Learning:** At MTEC, we believe in learning by doing. While some schools train only via textbook, MTEC students spend up to 50 percent of their classroom time working with the equipment they will see in the field.

- **Accelerated Approach:** Our six-week Oilheat Technician Training program eliminates six months of apprentice time required for Maine State Journeyman licensing, saving our students time and money.

With hands-on training and certification in our world-class Brunswick facility, MTEC can prepare you for a diverse range of professions. To learn more, visit hotjobsstarthere.com or call 729-5298.

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CMCC provides a broad range of degrees for varied student needs across Maine and beyond

SPECIAL TO COLLEGE BOUND
From CMCC

Located on the shores of beautiful Lake Auburn, Central Maine Community College (CMCC) boasts a vibrant campus community that is committed to preparing students for challenging careers or transfer to four-year colleges. We offer more than 41 associate degree, certificate and advanced certificate programs leading to technical, business, government and health careers. With hands-on programs utilizing cutting-edge technology, strong academic resources, on-campus housing, athletics and student organizations, CMCC offers a complete college experience.

In addition to associate degrees and certificates in popular career and technical fields, such as computer technology, criminal justice, medical assisting, automotive, electromechanical and precision machining technology, the College offers associate in arts degrees in general studies or liberal studies, programs designed for transfer to a four-year college or university. We even have a transfer advisor to show you the way.

The CMCC Mustangs participate nationally in the USCAA (United States Collegiate Athletic Association) and locally in the Yankee Small College Conference (YSCC). The College offers basketball, soccer and cross country for men and women; baseball and ice hockey for men and softball and volleyball for women. The women's basketball team has captured back-to-

back YSCC championships and won the 2017 USCAA Women's Division II national championship.

While the hockey team plays just down the road at the Norway Savings Bank Arena, Maine's only dual-surface ice facility, the baseball, softball and soccer teams will soon have new fields right on campus as the College is constructing a new, artificial turf and fully-lit athletic complex.

At CMCC we believe learning takes place both inside and outside the classroom. The College offers many ways for students to become more involved in our campus community. Join one of our many student organizations, socialize in one of our student lounges, or work out in the fitness center—the choices are many!

The College offers three living options for full-time students: Rancourt Hall, a four-floor residence hall overlooking Lake Auburn; Fortin Hall, which includes a large game room and lounge; and a two-building apartment complex. In addition to the benefits of being close to classes and campus activities, students feel at home on our safe, well-lit campus.

At CMCC, students receive a quality education at affordable prices, one that prepares them for interesting and rewarding work . . . right here in Maine! Want to learn more? Visit the website at www.cmcc.edu or contact us anytime at 755-5273 or enroll@cmcc.edu. And make plans to join us for our summer open house from 4 to 7 p.m. Wednesday, July 11.

 **Central Maine**
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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KVCC offers agriculture, lineworker degrees

Older students switch gears to participate

BY SUSAN VARNEY
Correspondent

Richard Poulin, a U.S. Army veteran who owns a 20-acre farm in Corinna, knows what it's like to need help overcoming trauma. He was in the U.S. Army for eight years, with tours in Iraq and Afghanistan, and then 18 months in troop support under a Department of Defense contract. He worked on weapons repairs while in the service, and later in computer tech, which he disliked. Upon returning from duty, he was in a "very dark place," but has found help with the VA.

Once example of this is seen in the 1800s-era farm he owns with his wife, which is benefiting from new insights he's gained from the Sustainable Agriculture program at Kennebec Valley Community College in Fairfield. Poulin and his wife, Elizabeth, bought the farm — where they have horses, chickens and will eventually have Belted Galloway cattle — before enrolling in the Sustainable Agriculture program.

"I do some things on my farm; the next semester I take a class and find out everything I did wrong," he said. KVCC's Sustainable Agriculture program offers a problem-solving approach that engages students in real-world problems presented by local farmers. It also helps them hone skills by participating in a summer internship. The two-year curriculum includes classes in soil, plant and animal science, crop production, integrated pest management, farm infrastructure and sustainable livestock management. Business courses include agricultural marketing, accounting and small business.

"I planned on providing for me and my wife," Poulin said. And he has dreams to provide for even more people.

Poulin has experience in building garden sheds and said he is very interested in the growing popularity of so-called "tiny" houses. He hopes to someday build a row of tiny houses on his farm for homeless veterans, as a stepping stone on their way to health and productivity. That project helps connect his own military experience with what he's learned about running and managing a farm.

"I like leading and teaching and helping people," said Poulin.

KVCC's Sustainable Agriculture program provides students with the technical and business skills necessary to manage or develop a small farm or agricultural business. There are 11 people graduating this year from the two-year program, which is offered at KVCC's Alford campus. Graduates are awarded an Associate in Applied Science degree.



Contributed photo

Kennebec Valley Community College student, Richard Poulin, Corinna, is graduating this year from the Sustainable Agriculture program. Poulin plans to continue his education at the University of Maine, Orono to get a B.S. in Sustainable Agriculture.

'I FELL IN LOVE'

Poulin's wife, Elizabeth, who is also graduating this year from the Nursing program, was the one who suggested that he investigate new paths after a career in the military — Sustainable Agriculture became his focus. "I fell in love with this program," he said. "The instructors, Bo Dennis and Ben Crockett, are down to earth and keep the classes exciting and interesting, including the internship."

KVCC's agriculture program also works closely with the college's food service and culinary arts department, cafeterias and cafes as part of a comprehensive farm-to-table focus. All composted material goes to the farm, where it is used to make compost for crops, which are then used by the school to feed students and staff.

Poulin plans to go on to the University of Maine at Orono to pursue a Bachelor Degree of Science in Sustainable Agriculture, and said he may return to KVCC after graduating at UMaine.

LINWORKER PROGRAM

Julie Harmatys, 42, of Farmington, is graduating this year from the Electrical Lineworker Technology program — she is the oldest student enrolled, with the average age being 23. She has run a dog-grooming business, worked 15 years as a propane deliverer, then office manager, moving on to the paper mill in Jay until the paper machine was closed down. Her unemployment compensation

helped her to go to school and train for a new career. She also received a government grant through the Trade Adjustment Act to help with the cost of textbooks and tuition.

Why the lineworker program? While it is not traditionally geared toward females, Harmatys felt she needed a high-wage, high-demand job. She passed the requirements, which included obtaining a commercial driver's license and the ability to carry the 30-pound work belt as well as other equipment. A career as a lineworker also requires that the person not fear heights and be a team worker. Students work together for success — teamwork is important for a lineworker because "your life depends on it," according to Harmatys. Within the curriculum, students are trained in CPR and rigging, which is the act of holding down a load for the road on trailers. They also are trained in chainsaw use and safety, and taught hand signals for times when their equipment is too loud to be heard and understood.

Harmatys is feeling very positive regarding employment prospects in the field.

"I'm open to travel and there are plenty of jobs out West; I expect to have one by graduation," she said.

The college assists in this process by inviting recruiters to the campus to meet students. Harmatys has already interviewed with On Target, Cianbro, Emera and others. When



Photo by Susan Varney

Kennebec Valley Community College Student Julie Harmatys, Farmington, first woman in the Electrical Lineworker Technology program, will be graduating this month.



Contributed photo

Kennebec Valley Community College students Julie Harmatys and Austin Burgoyne are training on an electrical pole. Both are graduating this year from the Electrical Lineworker Technology program.

she is hired she will be expected to do an apprenticeship program for 3 1/2 years.

In addition to the on-site recruiters, KVCC has Equal Opportunity Programs, administrative support and guidance support to help students succeed. Harmatys worked with Nick Runco and Lisa Black of the federal TRIO Student Support Services program in her path toward her degree.

These students are examples of the successes that can result from the unique opportunities offered at Kennebec Valley Community College, where the students all spoke highly of the positive atmosphere, helpfulness and support of teachers and staff.

For more information about programs at KVCC, go to www.kvcc.me.edu or call 453-5822.

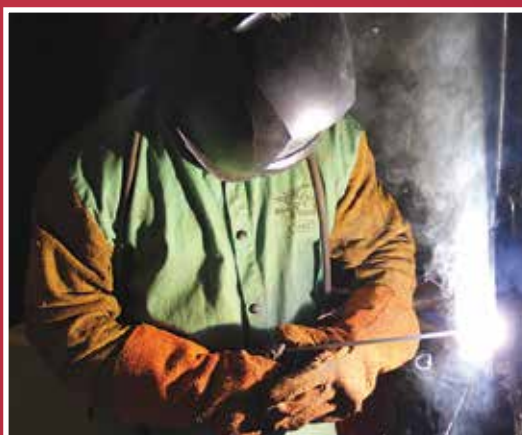
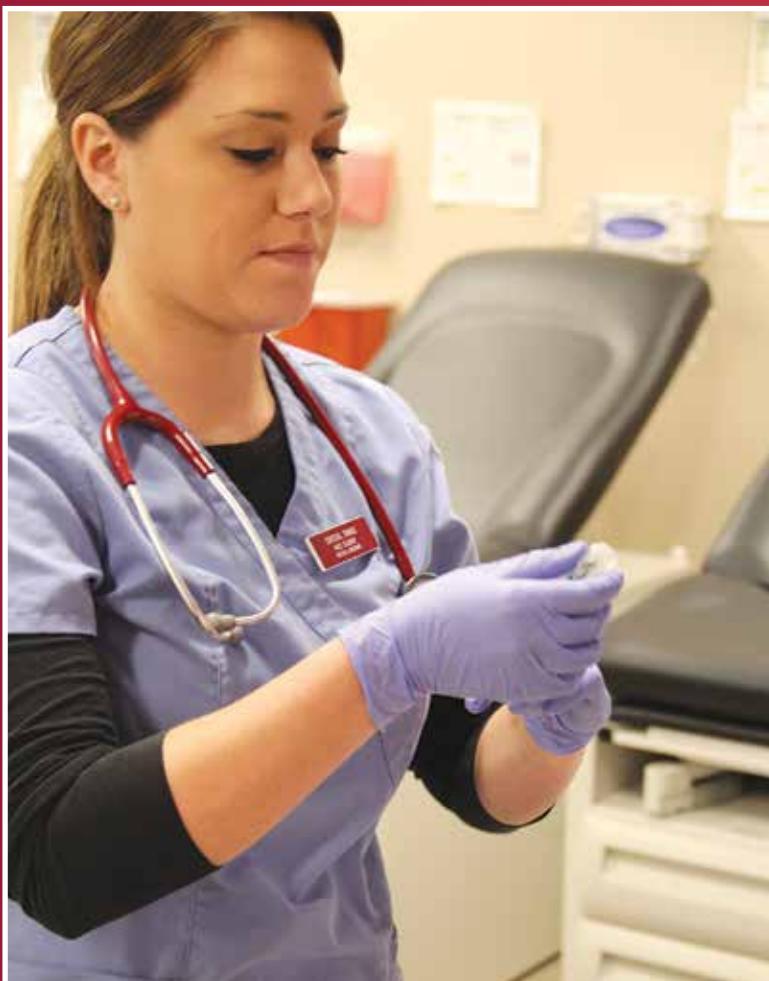
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