



HAROLD ALFOND CENTER
FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF
MAINE'S WORKFORCE

Strengthening Maine's Talent Pipeline

From Pre-Hire Training to
Upskilling for Retention



Maine's Community Colleges

Early College



Earn up to 18 college
credits

Earn a Digital Badge



Dive into a specialized
topic

Short-Term Training



Get the skills you need
to go to work fast

One-Year Certificate



Earn a certificate in a
field of interest

Associate's Degree



Earn a two-year degree
and pursue your career

Transfer to Four-Year



Transfer your credits to a
four-year program



Stackable Workforce Training



Pre-Hire

Short-term Workforce Training

Goal: 19,342

Incumbent Worker

Professional Development

Goal: 43,721

Scholarships

for Continued Education

Goal: 7,442

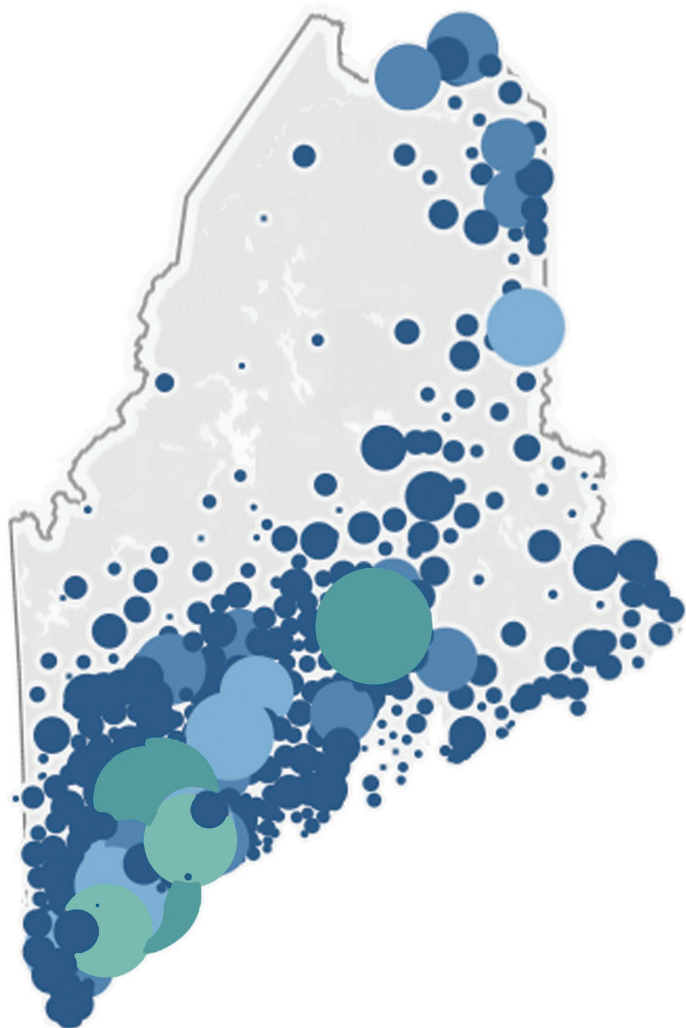
Short-term Training Investments

1994 - Current	2018 - 2021	2022 - 2024	2025 - 2030
1994 Maine Quality Centers 2015 Put ME to Work Annual appropriation	Harold Alfond Foundation Grant I \$3.6 million	Harold Alfond Foundation Grant II \$15.5 million Maine Jobs & Recovery Plan \$35.5 million	Harold Alfond Foundation Grant III \$75.5 million
Total trained: 33,782	Total trained: 401	Total trained: 26,755	Training goal: 70,505
MQC was created in 1994 by the Maine Legislature to meet the workforce education and training needs of new and expanding businesses in Maine and provide new employment and career advancement opportunities for Maine people. The program provides grants to Maine employers to fund customized new hire or incumbent worker training delivered by the Maine Community College System.	The first grant from the Harold Alfond Foundation provided funding to expand MQC programs. It created new short-term training programs in healthcare, information technology, construction, manufacturing, and the trades.	The second grant from the Harold Alfond Foundation vastly expanded the roster and reach of short-term workforce training programs and established the Harold Alfond Center for the Advancement of Maine's Workforce, which coordinates all short-term workforce training for the Maine's community colleges, including MQC projects. With the additional one-time funding from the Maine Jobs and Recovery Plan, the Alfond Center was able to set a goal of training 24,000 Mainers by 2025.	The third grant from the Harold Alfond Foundation continues the work and momentum from Grant II and provides funding for all three stages of training the Center offers: pre-hire training, incumbent worker training, and scholarships for working individuals to earn a degree. This grant aims to deepen relationships with industry sectors and the 1,941 employers that are part of the Center's Maine Workforce Development Compact.
Pre-Hire Incumbent Worker	Pre-Hire	Pre-Hire Incumbent Worker Scholarships	Pre-Hire Incumbent Worker Scholarships

Statewide Partnerships



Statewide Impact: 22,015 trained in FY26



95%
Maine communities
that have been
supported through
Center training
programs


6,122
Training programs offered


1,699
Programs that stack to
additional credentials or
credit bearing pathways

**Stage One
Pre-Hire**

5,148 Target: 3,323

85.5% completion rate
Goal: 70%

**Stage Two
Incumbent Worker**

16,09 Target: 7,199

87.2% completion rate
Goal: 70%

**Stage Three
Scholarships**

1,133 Target: 1,133

92.7% completion rate
Goal: 50%

Data: July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026

The Harold Alfond Center



Public and private funding

- Maine Quality Centers
- Put ME to Work
- Annual appropriation
- Depart. of Labor
- Depart. of Defense
- Depart. of Economic & Comm. Development
- Northern Regional Border Commission
- U.S. Navy
- MJRP
- Harold Alfond Foundation
- Small Business Association

Grant writing

- Private philanthropy
- Multi-party grants
- CDS
- State
- Federal
- Center, Foundation, and colleges

Training

- Pre-hire job development
- Incumbent professional development
- Scholarships
- Justice-involved
- Recovery-friendly
- Summer Academies
- Remote work

Employer collaboration

- Maine Workforce Development Compact
- Industry sectors
- Advisory boards
- Associations
- Unions
- Chambers

Developing best practices

- College curriculum
- Stipends
- Employer relations
- Student resource hub
- Employer resources
- Apprenticeships
- Degree pathways
- Third-party trainer network

Brand amplification platform

- Maine Ideas podcast
- Talent Summit
- Business Blueprint webinar series
- Thought leadership
- Storytelling
- Media
- National conferences
- 2,000 employers
- 2,000 trainers
- 50,000 trainees

New podcast

MAINE IDEAS



A podcast on workforce, business, and innovation from the Harold Alfond Center for the Advancement of Maine's Workforce and Maine Community College System.

hosted by Dan Belyea
Chief Workforce Development Officer
Maine Community College System

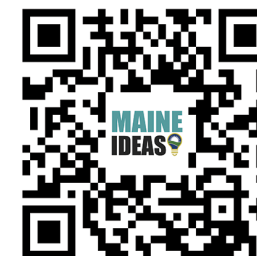


LISTEN ON SPOTIFY



[BIT.LY/MAINE-IDEAS](https://bit.ly/maine-ideas)

LISTEN ON YOUTUBE



[BIT.LY/MAINEIDEAS-YOUTUBE](https://bit.ly/maineideas-youtube)

Industry Sector Partnerships

training development driven by Maine employers

Maine's Community Colleges



cmcc.edu



emcc.edu



kvcc.me.edu



nmcc.edu



smccme.edu



wccc.me.edu



yccc.edu

Sector Partnership Guiding Principles

01

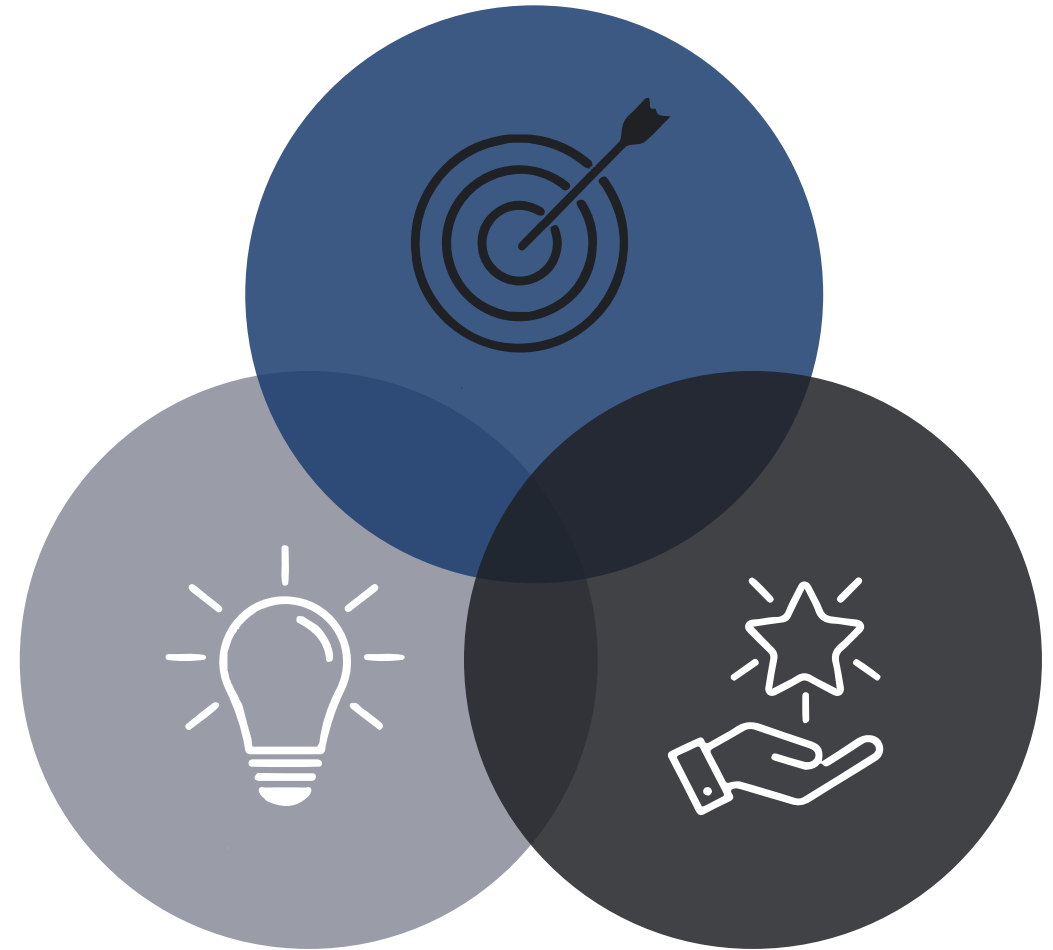
Industry Driven

02

Collaborative Solutions

03

Stronger Talent Pipelines



Industry Sector Partnership Model

Harold Alfond Center for the Advancement of Maine's Workforce

Partnership Goal: To develop and implement workforce training strategies to expand the talent pipeline into frontline roles in the industry.

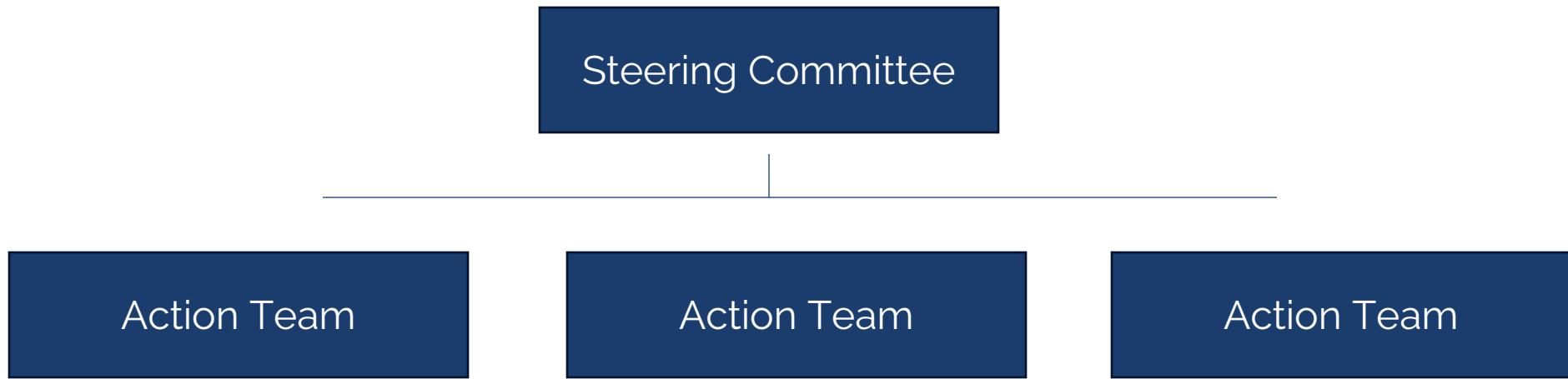
Components:

- Statewide
- Industry-led, supported by education and workforce partners
- Short training programs
- Recruitment and retention strategies
- Address barriers to participation
- Connections to employment, advancement or further education



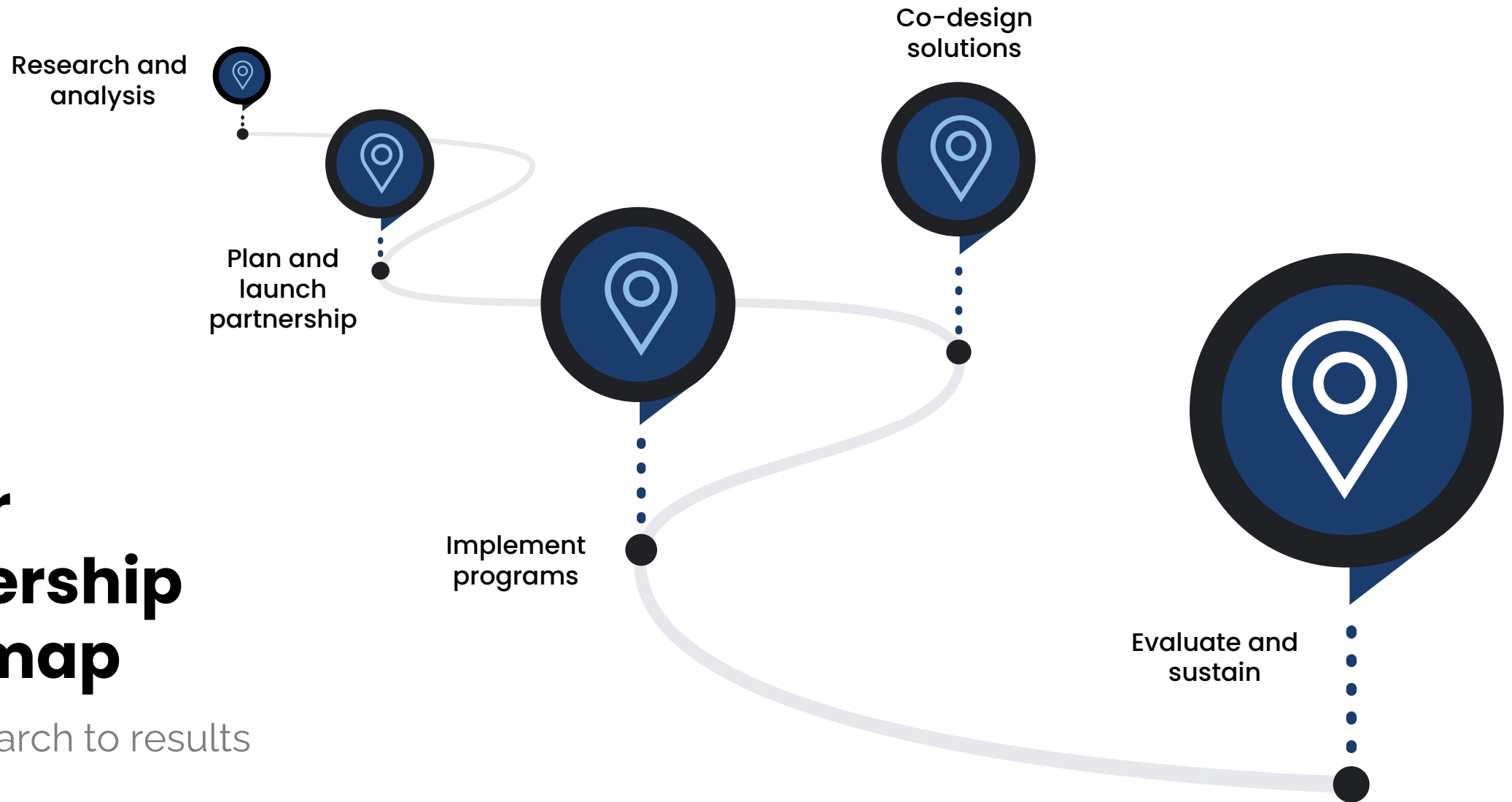
Model

Industry Sector Partnership Structure



Sector Partnership Roadmap

From research to results



Industry Sector Partnerships



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MAINE'S WORKFORCE

Construction Industry Workforce Partnership

- Est. March 2025
- Scope: Construction and trades workers
- 50 industry, education and workforce partners
- 23 industry associations, union and contractors represented
- Action teams: 1) Carpentry, 2) HVAC, 3) Heavy Equipment Operators



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Healthcare Industry Workforce Partnership

- Est. Nov 2025
- Scope: Hospital and outpatient care workers
- 50 industry, education and workforce partners
- 17 healthcare employers and associations represented
- Action teams: 1) Medical Assistant, 2) Pathways, 3) EMT/AEMT

Partnership Impact

Construction Industry Workforce Partnership



SM HEO program, Windham



KV HEO Program, Fairfield



Maine Construction Academy, CM, Auburn



SM Construction Institute, South Portland

Upcoming:

- HVAC Summer Career Academies at 4 colleges*
- Maine Construction Academy at 4 more colleges
- Customer service for trades courses
- New carpentry programs at 2 colleges

* The HVAC Careers Summer Academies programs are funded through a grant from the Maine Department of Energy Resources as a part of the U.S. Department of Energy's Training for Residential Energy Contractors Program



Partnership Impact

Healthcare Industry Workforce Partnership

- Upcoming for fall 2026 and early 2027:
- Expansion of accelerated, hybrid MA programs across the colleges
- MA pre-apprenticeship pilot
- Language and work readiness pathway programs to healthcare training and college enrollment
- Expanded college and hospital EMT partnerships in rural Maine
- New clinical coordination model for Advanced EMTs to expand the EMS talent pipeline

Lessons Learned and Emerging Best Practices



Invest in relationships



Employer driven, education and workforce supported



Clear goals, objectives and strategies



Listen and respond to data and feedback



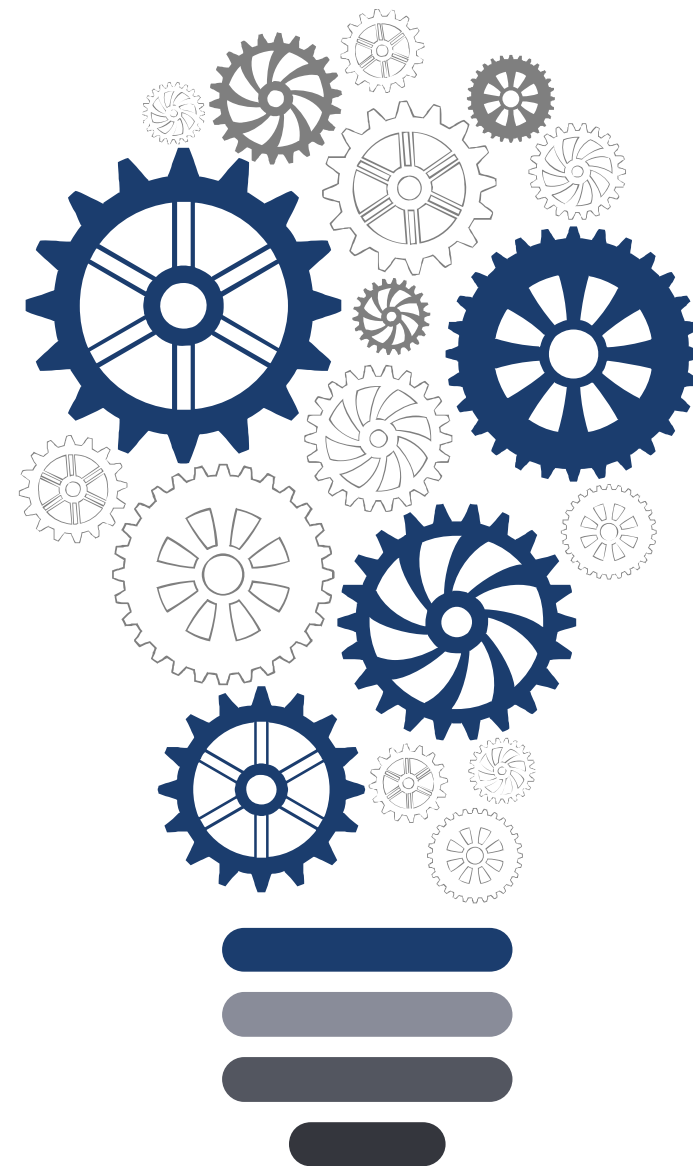
Identify early wins and build momentum



Respect time



Celebrate success



Employer Benefits

through the Harold Alfond Center for the Advancement of Maine's Workforce

Upskill Maine Portal

<https://upskillmaine.powerappsportals.com/>



Compact Member

Fill out your application to become a Compact Member, submit a funding request, and close out your project all through one portal.



MQC/PMTW Projects

Access state-funded workforce training for new hires with Maine Quality Centers (MQC) and Put ME to Work (PMTW). These programs can be accessed with a community college partner.



Scholarships

Available to help your employees pursue an academic certificate or degree program at Maine's community colleges. Scholarships do not impact an individual's \$1,200 availability for professional development.



Resources Page

Information and training resources will be available as a resource page within Upskill Maine.



Maine Workforce Development Compact



Employer Partners

Nearly 2,000 businesses, associations and nonprofits that represent over half of Maine's workforce.



Shared Investment Model

Compact members can access a \$1,200 match per frontline worker, per year.



Training Solutions

Employers can use Maine's community colleges, an in-house trainer, or a third-party trainer. The Center has built a network of 975 training providers.



A Retention Model

88% of employers are concerned about retention. 94% of employees would stay with a company if it offered learning and development opportunities.

Who is Eligible & How to Access Funding

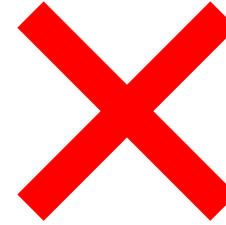
Who is Eligible?

- Maine-based employers of any size
- Businesses, nonprofits, and associations
- Frontline workers
- Incumbent worker upskilling for current staff

Accessing Training Dollars

1. Join the Compact as a member employer via Upskill Maine
2. Sign an MOA
3. Choose a training provider (college, in-house, or 3rd party)
4. Submit a funding request and access up to a \$1,200 match per frontline worker/per year
5. Track outcomes and report completions at the end of training
6. Get reimbursed!

What will the \$1,200 match cover?



- Trainees must live in Maine and work for a Maine organization.
- Training for frontline, incumbent workers
- **Training that enhances an individual's skills and advances their careers**
- Training through Maine's community colleges, through a third-party trainer, or through an in-house training

- Training for C-suite, volunteers, board members, or elected officials
- Required annual training that does not enhance skills
- Reimbursement for travel expenses or employee wages
- Publication subscriptions
- Non-professional development training

What types of training are covered?



College classes



Certifications



Industry conferences



Job skills



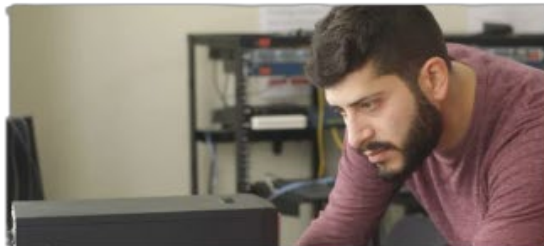
Technology training



Supervisory courses



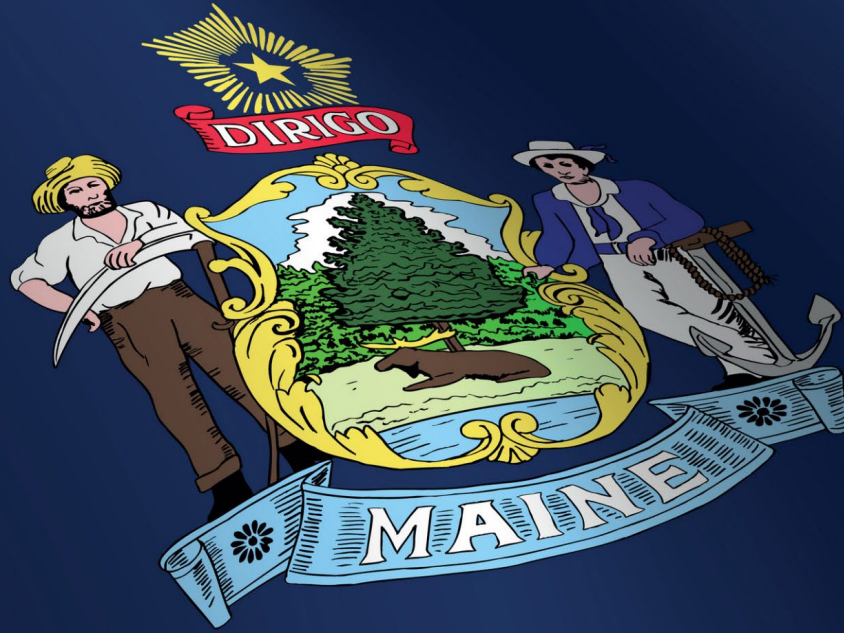
Lean Six Sigma



Project management



De-escalation



Maximize Your Investment in Employee Training

Dirigo Business Incentive & Compact Funding



bitly



Short-term workforce training through Maine's community colleges

MAINE.
ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT

Scholarships

for working Mainers

Alfond Workforce Scholarship

\$212

per scholarship
2 per semester | 6 per year

Covers 50%+
of most classes at
Maine community colleges

Eligibility

- Maine resident
- 18+
- Diploma, Hi-SET
- Working at least part-time
- Enrolled in <11 credits



What Employers Need to Know

Hiring & Retention Benefits

- A compelling benefit to attract new hires
- Supports employee advancement and loyalty
- No paperwork required from the employer
- Student handles the application themselves
- No Compact membership required to use

Independent from Compact Funding

Separate from Compact Funding

Alfond Workforce Scholarships do NOT count against:

- Your company's Compact funding total
- An employee's individual funding total

Students can use both benefits (but not for the same class).

What Can Students Study at Maine's community colleges?

ARTS, HUMANITIES, DIGITAL MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS



BUSINESS & HOSPITALITY



COMPUTER SCIENCE & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY



HEALTH SCIENCES



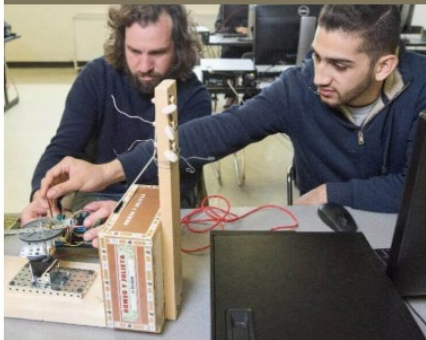
INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGY & TRANSPORTATION



PUBLIC SAFETY



SCIENCES, ENGINEERING & MATHEMATICS



EDUCATION, HUMAN SERVICES & SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES



[MCCS Programs of Study](#)

And many more — certificate programs, workforce development, and professional courses available.

How Students Apply

1

Enroll in a Maine Community College

<https://mccs.me.edu/programs-colleges/>

2

Visit Upskill Maine Portal and Create Log In

<https://upskillmaine.powerappsportals.com/>

Create a new account or log in with your existing credentials

3

Enter Your Info

Provide name, address, and confirm Maine residency and part-time enrollment status

4

Enter Course & Employer Information

Enter the course(s) you are applying the scholarship to (up to 2 per semester) and your employer information.

5

Submit & Apply

Submit your application — the scholarship is applied to your tuition balance

6

Apply Before Semester Ends

You can apply anytime before the end of the semester — if enrolled now, apply before May!

Summer and Fall semesters are open for enrollment now.



Free Google Trainings for Staff



Google Data Analytics



Google Project Management



Google UX Design



Google Cybersecurity



Google Digital Marketing & E-commerce



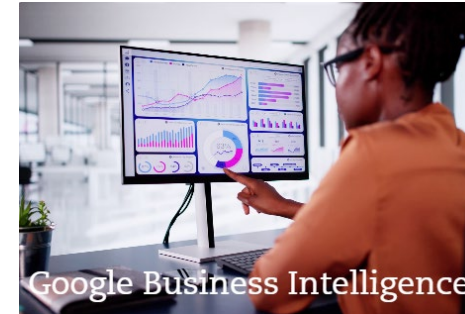
Google IT Support



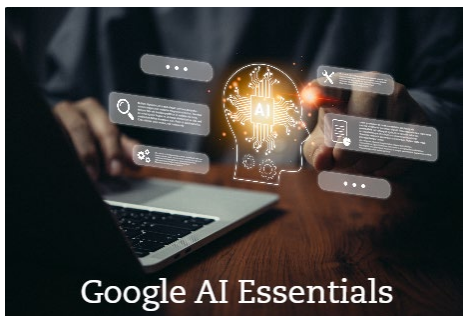
Google IT Automation with Python



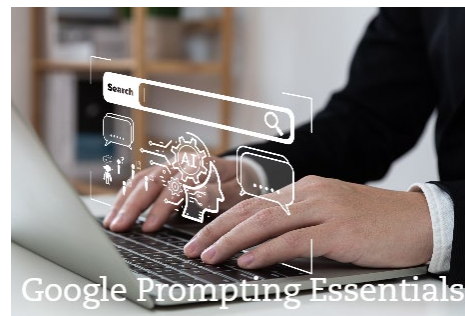
Google Advanced Data Analytics



Google Business Intelligence



Google AI Essentials



Google Prompting Essentials

<https://alfondcenter.mccs.me.edu/google>



Workforce Development Coordinators



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Community Colleges



[Chris Young,](#)
Eastern Maine Community College

SAVE YOUR SEAT, MOVE MAINE FORWARD

Join the leaders working to solve Maine's biggest workforce challenges for a one-day summit dedicated to workforce collaboration, innovation, and action



THE INAUGURAL



Advancing Maine's workforce, together



November 17, 2026
8:00 AM - 4:00 PM



Augusta Civic Center
Augusta, Maine



Registration: \$150
Compact members eligible for 50% reimbursement

Thank you for your time



Charlie Collins
Executive Director

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