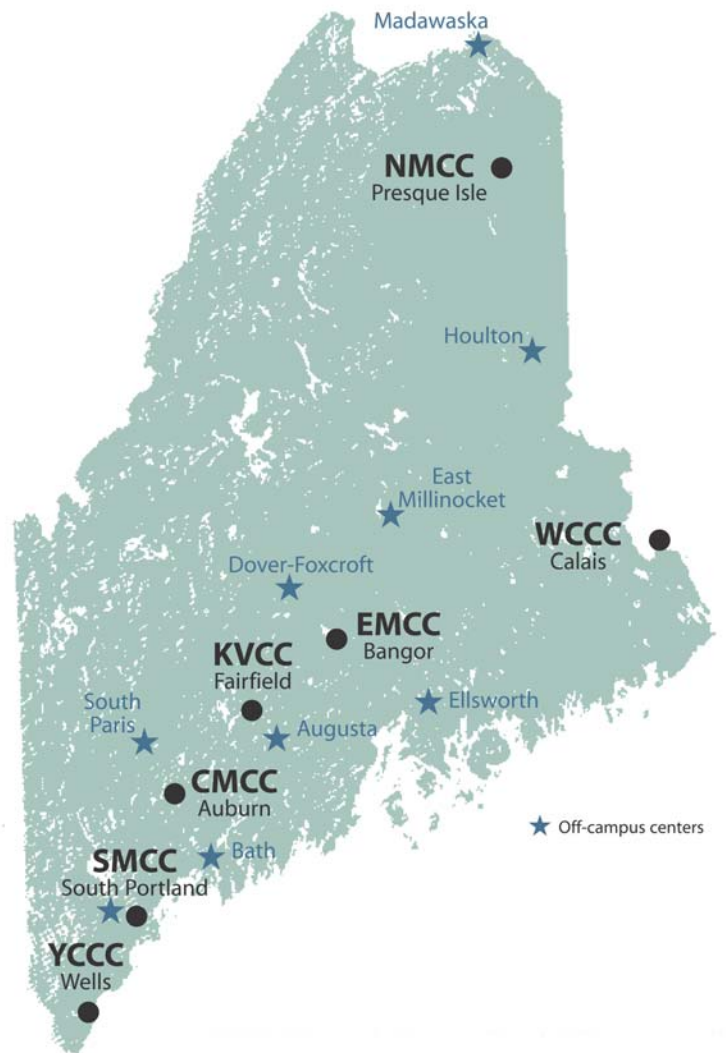




Report and Recommendations of

The MCCS Rural Initiative

Investing in the future of rural Maine



December 2007

I applaud the community colleges for focusing attention and resources on the specific needs of rural Maine. Education is key to strengthening Maine's rural economy, and the community colleges are uniquely positioned to deliver programs and services that lead to a more highly skilled workforce and an improved quality of life.

*The Honorable John E. Baldacci
Governor of Maine*

Our rural communities are more than just the public face of Maine, they are the core of who we are as a state and as a people. Along their rolling hills, forests and coastline live forty-two percent of our state's population. Many of our rural residents live in stark contrast to their urban counterparts. By key economic indicators their incomes are lower, unemployment is higher, and many fewer have attained a college degree.

Our state's evolving economy presents unique challenges for rural communities. At the forefront of these challenges is the need for a skilled and educated workforce. We believe that investments in the people of rural Maine are critical to our ability to build a prosperous economy and preserve a way of life second to none.

The community college system stands ready to work with rural Maine to build an educated and skilled workforce, one that helps assure a stable, sustainable economy for all of Maine.

*John Fitzsimmons, President
Maine Community College System
December 2007*

Overview

More than a half-million people live in rural Maine, about 42 percent of the state's population. Many of them enjoy the significant benefits of living in close proximity to the state's abundant natural resources and of being sustained by a strong sense of community.¹

But many of those who live in the rural parts of our state also struggle mightily to make ends meet. Deep, ongoing job losses in traditional manufacturing and natural resource-based industries have caused economic distress throughout much of rural Maine. If you live in a rural part of our state in 2007, you are significantly more likely to be unemployed, to live in poverty, and to lack a college degree than if you reside in a more heavily populated area.

An estimated 12.2 percent of rural Maine households live below the poverty line. In fact, poverty in Washington, Somerset, and Aroostook Counties is about twice that of Sagadahoc and York Counties.² Most disturbing of all, between 2000 and 2005, Maine saw the largest percentage increase in rural child poverty of any state in the nation. According to 2005 U.S. Census data, 22.4 percent of rural Maine children under 18 live in poverty.

The troubling economic gap between Maine's rural and urban areas is matched by a growing educational divide. When the state's economy was fueled by its natural resources, Maine people could often find solid work in paper and textile mills, in the woods, and on the water. Hard work, common sense, and dedication to a task were often the keys to success. But times have changed, and Maine's workforce needs a stronger skill set in order to succeed in today's economy and attract new employers.

As researchers at the Margaret Chase Smith Policy Center note, there is a clear and growing correlation between education and income in Maine. It is simply no coincidence that the counties with the lowest percentage of adults holding a college degree are also those with the highest poverty rates. According to recent U.S. Census data, some 80 percent of residents of Somerset, Piscataquis, Washington, and Aroostook Counties do not hold either an associate or bachelor's degree.

These facts and hard realities led the Maine Community College System to embark on a listening tour throughout rural Maine in the summer and fall of 2007. Clearly, Maine's community colleges cannot—on their own—address all of the many challenges that confront the rural areas of our state. But because they are dedicated to both workforce and economic development and are designed to be responsive to regional economic needs and opportunities, the colleges are uniquely positioned to help address some of the major workforce challenges confronting rural Maine.

¹ A number of government agencies (among them the U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Department of Labor) define rural in different ways and for different purposes. In order to determine a definition for this initiative that is relevant to its purposes and captures the unique characteristics of the Maine landscape, the MCCS will convene a small workgroup to review and clarify existing definitions.

² U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, 2004 County Level Poverty Rates for Maine.

Over the course of four months, MCCS President John Fitzsimmons traveled some 2,500 miles to meet with nearly 400 community and business leaders from all 16 counties.³ The conversations focused on how the state’s community colleges could support and strengthen efforts to improve Maine’s rural economies. Not surprisingly, the issues raised by participants in the meetings varied by region, as did their recommendations for how the community colleges might better serve individual areas of the state.⁴ Nonetheless, a number of common themes emerged that have informed the recommendations contained within this report.

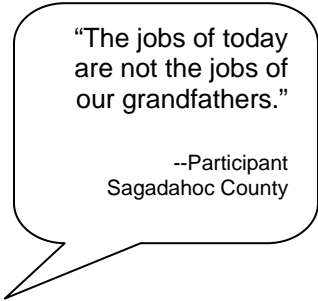
➤ **A sense of optimism and long-term commitment**

Across rural Maine, strong, positive energy exists to improve the economy and strengthen communities. Again and again, focus group participants expressed a deep appreciation for the quality of life and sense of community that exist in rural Maine, and they indicated a clear willingness to work hard to bring about positive change in their region. Participants spoke frequently of a strong desire to sustain rural Maine’s quality of life for their children and future generations and to enable their children to find solid, meaningful work that would allow them to remain in their communities. In meeting after meeting, participants demonstrated a clear-eyed understanding of the realities and the barriers confronting their region of the state.

➤ **Across Maine, a lack of qualified workers for available jobs**

Participants in meetings across the state spoke frequently of the need for more skilled workers, particularly in all areas of health care, in construction, in niche manufacturing, and in such traditional natural resource-based industries as pulp and paper. At the same time, they spoke openly about the lack of preparedness and “soft skills” of many entry-level workers, and they worried about the future impact of a rapidly aging workforce—who, they wonder, will replace the current skilled workers?

Statewide data suggests these concerns are well founded. Jobs in even the most traditional of trades have become far more complex in recent years. Many of these jobs now rely on cutting-edge technology and on workers with the skills to use that technology and adapt to new work processes. According to the Maine Department of Labor, the number of jobs in occupations requiring some form of post-secondary education or training is expected to rise by 16 percent between 2002 and 2012.⁵



“The jobs of today are not the jobs of our grandfathers.”

--Participant
Sagadahoc County

This is true in both rural and urban Maine. A survey conducted by the Maine State Chamber of Commerce in 2004 reported that nearly 50 percent of its members across the state were having a difficult time finding skilled workers. A recent analysis by the

³ Appendix A includes a list of the meeting locations and those who participated.

⁴ Appendix B includes many of the recommendations and suggestions made by participants in the rural meetings.


⁵ “The Relationship Between Education and Unemployment and Earnings.” Maine Department of Labor, Labor Market Information Services. <http://www.maine.gov/labor/lmis/pdf/EducationUnemploymentEarnings.pdf>.

MCCS identified a projected annual shortage of more than 4,200 workers trained at the community college level, many of them in industries critical to rural Maine's economy and quality of life, among them health care, hospitality, security, and construction.⁶ And in Aroostook County, a study by the University of Southern Maine's Center for Business and Economic Research reported that although interaction and communication skills were most easy to find in new hires, employers were more challenged to find workers who possessed the necessary analytical and math skills.⁷

➤ **The importance of the community colleges to rural Maine**

In meeting after meeting, participants made clear that the state's community colleges play a vital role in their region of the state. Many stressed that the colleges and their off-campus centers are critical to the economic, educational, and cultural life of their communities and provide training and education that are key to the success of many rural Maine businesses, both large and small.

Others noted the importance of the colleges to individual success. As several said, the choice for many rural Maine people (especially those who are low-income or the first in their family to consider higher education) is not between a community college and another institution; it's between a community college and nothing. As one participant in Dover-Foxcroft put it: "The community colleges are a safety net for so many."



"The community colleges are just as important to our communities as our hospitals are."

--Participant,
East Millinocket

⁶ Available at <http://www.mccs.me.edu/about/gapanalysis.pdf>.

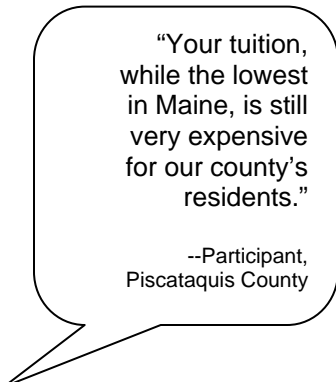
⁷ *A Profile of the Workforce in Aroostook County in 2007*, University of Southern Maine's Center for Business and Economic Research, August 2007. Available at <http://www.nmdc.org/pdf/AroostookLaborForce2007.pdf>.

Priorities and Action Steps

Many of the challenges that confront rural Maine are complex and will require coordinated and long-term responses by state and local governments, businesses, non-profits, schools, and involved citizens. Nonetheless, when asked to focus specifically on how the community colleges could provide greater support and assistance to their communities and local economies, meeting participants identified a number of common concerns and priorities.⁸ It is important to note that at many of the meetings, participants expressed a clear desire for an expansion of the community college system. The call for new off-campus centers was heard repeatedly, especially along the mid-coast and in the western mountains. Scarce state and community college resources make such an expansion unlikely in the near term; however, thanks to generous private support and a realignment of existing community college resources, the MCCS is able to move forward to address most—if not all—of the key priorities identified during its months’ long listening tour of rural Maine.

I. Provide more financial assistance to address income challenges

Incomes in most of rural Maine are, on average, about 80 percent of those in the state’s more urban areas, and the disparities can be dramatic, with per capita income ranging from a high of \$37,847 in Cumberland County to a low of \$23,921 in Somerset County.⁹ A 2006 survey of working age adults in Maine who lack a college degree found that the cost of college is a very real deterrent for a great many students. In fact, nearly 60 percent of survey respondents cited the cost of college as the primary reason why a college degree had not been pursued. And 88 percent said low cost would make pursuing a degree easier. As one participant from Waldo County told President Fitzsimmons quite simply during the rural initiative meeting in Belfast: “Price matters.”



“Your tuition, while the lowest in Maine, is still very expensive for our county’s residents.”

--Participant,
Piscataquis County

Participants noted that even when low- to moderate-income Maine people are able to cover the costs of college tuition and fees, they frequently confront other significant cost barriers, chief among them child care expenses. Indeed, over a third of Maine people who lack a college degree report that assistance with child care would make pursuing a degree easier.¹⁰ As one participant in the rural meetings noted: “Support services such as child care are lacking and that limits the ability of many people in rural areas to access their best ticket to prosperity.”

⁸ A full list of the suggestions made by participants in the MCCS rural meetings is included in Appendix B.

⁹ *Demographic and Economic Profile, Updated May 2006*. Rural Policy Research Institute. Available at <http://www.rupri.org/Forms/Maine.pdf>.

¹⁰ *Survey of Maine Citizens Who Have Not Attained a College Degree*. Strategic Marketing Services for the Maine Community College System, April 2006.

Because the poorest Maine counties are also the counties with the lowest percentage of adults holding a college degree, participants in the rural meetings stressed that higher education in those areas must be made as accessible as possible, both in terms of cost and proximity. As they noted, in many areas of the state employers lack the resources to assist their employees with college costs. Statewide, only 37 percent of employees report that their employers offer any type of educational benefits, and this percentage is significantly lower in rural Maine, where small businesses predominate.¹¹

Actions

Establish a \$5 million scholarship fund to assist Maine people living in rural communities

A gift from the Bernard Osher Foundation will enable the Maine Community College System to establish a \$5 million endowed scholarship fund, the proceeds of which will be used to award between 250 and 300 scholarships each year to students from rural Maine studying at a Maine community college. The largest endowed gift in the history of Maine's community colleges, the Osher gift of \$3.5 million is designed to be matched by \$1.5 million in other funds, bringing the total of the endowed fund to \$5 million.

A native of Biddeford, resident of San Francisco, and a founding director of one of the nation's largest savings institutions, Bernard Osher has long been a benefactor of higher education in Maine and across the country. In all, his contributions to education, the arts, and social services have totaled over \$800 million, placing him among the nation's most generous philanthropists. With this most recent gift, his support of the Maine Community College System totals nearly \$8 million and has seeded an additional \$3 million in matching funds. Earlier scholarship gifts from the Bernard Osher Foundation provided key support in the transition from Maine's technical to community colleges and reflect Mr. Osher's deep commitment to expanding access to higher education in Maine.

Expand an existing scholarship program to include child care assistance

To help students with demonstrated financial need who require assistance with child care expenses in order to attend (or remain in) school, the Maine Community College System will broaden an existing tuition scholarship program (funded by \$150,000 in Racino revenues) to include assistance with child care costs.¹²

¹¹ *Survey of Maine Citizens Who Have Not Attained a College Degree*. Strategic Marketing Services for the Maine Community College System, April 2006.

¹² Under state law the MCCS receives one percent of Racino revenues for scholarships. In the fall of 2008, that will generate approximately \$400,000. About \$150,000 of that total will provide scholarships to Early College for ME participants who enroll in one of Maine's community colleges, and \$100,000 will be used for other scholarships. The remaining \$150,000 will be used for scholarships that, previously, had covered only tuition and that will now be broadened to help cover a student's child care expenses.

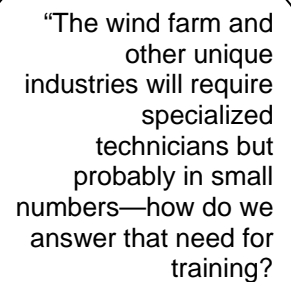
II. Bring programs out to rural areas

In spite of the fact that Maine's seven community colleges and their nine off-campus centers are within 25 miles of 92 percent of Maine's population, distance and accessibility are still an issue for many individuals in many small communities. This is true even in York County where, as one participant in the North Berwick meeting noted: "It's a long way from Parsonsfield [on the New Hampshire border] to Wells [home of York County Community College]."

For many working adults, traveling an hour or more in the evenings to get to a class is simply unrealistic and too costly. And while some courses lend themselves to distance education through interactive television or on-line technologies, others, especially hands-on occupational courses, do not.

As participants noted again and again, the need for skilled workers in a host of industries, many of them in the trades, exists across rural Maine. This is especially true in health care. A recent report from the Maine Center for Economic Policy notes that health care occupations now comprise one out of six jobs in Maine's more rural counties, and their growth has more than offset manufacturing job losses over the last two decades. In order to support and expand this important growth sector, Maine needs to ensure greater access to advanced health care training for those who live and work in rural parts of the state. This issue was raised at nearly every one of the 16 meetings, and participants stressed that the need went far beyond nurse training.

The challenge, as participants noted, is one of scale. The number of students needing a particular program of study may be relatively small and the number of skilled workers needed by a business or industry—while critical to long-term success—may be limited. In many of the state's most rural areas, there simply may not be enough demand or adequate resources to support a permanent program. The solution: bring targeted, high-demand programs out on an intermittent basis.



"The wind farm and other unique industries will require specialized technicians but probably in small numbers—how do we answer that need for training?"

--Participant, Presque Isle

Action

Create *Bring College to ME*

The Maine Community College System will create a new initiative called *Bring College to ME* that will deliver targeted, two-year degree programs—on an intermittent basis—to rural Maine.


Because of the critical demand for skilled health care workers in all parts of the state, the first of the *Bring College to ME* programs will be health care related. Initially, *Bring College to ME* will result in five new health care programs stretching from rural York County to far northern Aroostook County. By the fall of 2010, the MCCS

expects to offer additional degree programs in other sectors, based on industry need and student demand.

The launch of *Bring College to ME* is made possible by two major gifts to the Maine Community College System. TD Banknorth, which has over the years generously supported a number of initiatives at our individual colleges, has made a System-wide gift of \$200,000 through the TD Banknorth Charitable Foundation to support *Bring College to ME*. The Betterment Fund has contributed \$150,000 to help launch the program, continuing its generous support of Maine's community colleges. Previously, the Betterment Fund was instrumental in funding the pilot of *Early College for ME*, a college transition program for high school students that now serves 74 high schools around the state and that has, to date, helped nearly 1,500 students prepare for and/or enroll in college.

These two gifts, combined with a \$400,000 allocation from the MCCS, will enable the Maine Community College System to launch *Bring College to ME* in the fall of 2008.

III. Increase distance learning opportunities



"The ability to use technology to engage a student versus having to travel to Bangor has been accepted well in our region."

--Participant,
East Millinocket

Across Maine, participants in the rural meetings were eager for greater access to the community colleges through the use of distance education. A number of participants noted that distance learning was especially convenient and important for rural students, providing them access to courses and programs not otherwise available. Others noted that the distance programming already offered by the community colleges allows people to stay in their communities and may in fact lessen the likelihood that they will leave home to receive their education and not come back. Certainly, the distance education offered by the community colleges has grown increasingly popular in recent

years. In fact, the number of registrations for on-line courses has doubled in just four years, to over 7,300 in 2007.

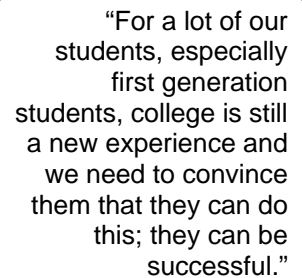
Action

Expand distance learning opportunities

The MCCS will expand the services and programs it provides to rural Maine via interactive television. Each of the seven colleges will add ITV services to an off-campus location. Funded through a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, funds from the 2007 bond for higher education, and the colleges' own resources, this \$245,000 expansion of interactive television services will significantly increase the ability of the colleges to make more college courses available to rural Maine residents.

IV. Increase high school students' access to the community colleges.

The success of both the MCCS *Early College for ME* program¹³ and other initiatives designed to give high school students access to community college courses prompted many participants in the rural meetings to call for an expansion of these opportunities. As participants noted, providing Maine students with a chance to experience college life before they leave high school often results in higher aspirations and greater confidence. One participant in Naples described the impact of the programs in this way: "Success breeds success." As others remarked, programs that make it possible for students to earn college credit while still in high school can actually reduce the total cost of college and the time required to complete a credential or degree.



"For a lot of our students, especially first generation students, college is still a new experience and we need to convince them that they can do this; they can be successful."

--Educator, South Paris

Action

Expand *On Course for College* for rural high school students

In 2007, the state's community colleges provided over 400 college courses to Maine high school students. During 2007/08, through a new initiative known as *On Course for College*, the MCCS will make available an additional 500 courses, at little or no cost, to Maine high school juniors and seniors.¹⁴ By the fall of 2008, 250 of those additional courses will be earmarked specifically for students living in rural Maine. Some of those students will enroll in courses at their local community college. Others will be able to take advantage of on-line and ITV course offerings. Still others will be able to take community college courses at their high school. These additional scholarships to rural Maine high schools students represent an investment of approximately \$60,000 by the MCCS.

¹³ Early College for ME is a comprehensive college transition program that provides high school juniors and seniors with the chance to enroll in college courses at a Maine community college, and to do so at little or no cost. Information about the program is available at <http://www.mccs.me.edu/student/oncourseforcollege.html>.

¹⁴ More information about *On Course for College* is available at <http://www.mccs.me.edu/student/oncourseforcollege.html>.

V. Expand workforce training opportunities for small, rural businesses

As noted earlier, many of Maine's employers lack the resources necessary to upgrade the skills of their workforce. Only about one third of Maine workers report that their employers offer any type of educational benefits.¹⁵ The MCCS Maine Quality Centers (MQC) Program has worked since 1994 to provide businesses seeking to expand or locate in Maine with free, customized workforce training. In all, the program—with an annual budget of about \$900,000—has helped nearly 200 Maine businesses expand or locate their operations in Maine, and these expansions represent over 10,700 new jobs, all of which must meet a minimum skill requirement and offer a competitive salary with benefits. But as several participants in the MCCS rural meetings noted, MQC's services are not as beneficial to rural Maine as they might be, as they are targeted to businesses with eight or more employees. Ninety percent of all of Maine's employers have 25 or fewer employees, and of the 140,000 small businesses in Maine—a great many of which are located in rural Maine—about 90 percent employ five or fewer workers.¹⁶

Action

Extend the services of the Maine Quality Centers to more small businesses

In order to enable more small businesses in rural Maine to access the workforce training services of the Maine Quality Centers, the MCCS will recommend to its Board of Trustees that it amend current procedures and allow the MQC to work with rural businesses with fewer than eight employees. This shift will mean greater access to workforce training for Maine's rural businesses and more skilled employment opportunities for Maine workers.

¹⁵ *Survey of Maine Citizens Who Have Not Attained a College Degree*. Strategic Marketing Services for the Maine Community College System, April 2006.

¹⁶ University of Maine Cooperative Extension. Available at: <http://www.umext.maine.edu/POW/POW2007/issuepapers/Entrepreneurship-Small%20and%20Home-Based%20Business.doc>

Appendix A: Meeting Participants

Dover-Foxcroft (7/19/07)

Jack Clukey	Town of Dover-Foxcroft
Thomas Kittredge	Piscataquis County Economic Development Council
Steve Pound	Cianbro Corp./Greenville Adult Education
Linda Gilbert	Camden National Bank
Russ Paige	Piscataquis Chamber of Commerce
Theresa Mudgett	TDC – Career Center
Judy Holt	Training and Development Corp.
Ruth Geiger	Interface Fabric
Sophia Wilson	Town of Brownville
Sheila Grant	Piscataquis County Economic Development Council
Linda Howard	Retired Educator
Rebekah Metzler	Bangor Daily News
Suzanne Rojas	MSAD 48 Adult Education
Rep. James Annis	State Representative
Stu Hedstrom	Piscataquis Observer
Patrick Myers	Center Theatre for the Performing Arts
Sue Mackey-Andrews	Solutions Consultant
Thelma Regan	PVAEC – Adult Education
George Barton	Retired Educator – PLI Steering Committee
John Holden	EMDC
John Simko	Town of Greenville
Mike Henderson	Piscataquis County
Thomas Iverson	Piscataquis County Emergency Management Agency
Paula Matulis	Penquis C.A.P.

East Millinocket (7/19/07)

Wendy-Jo Berube	Millinocket Regional Hospital
Rhonda Thompson	East Millinocket/Millinocket Adult Education
Tina Jamo	Katahdin Federal Credit Union
Amy Willard	Katahdin Region Higher Education Center
Carolyn Kettle	Katahdin Region Higher Education Center
Brian Wiley	Katahdin Area Chamber / Brookfield Power
Bruce McLean	Adjunct Faculty - Katahdin Region Higher Education Center
Deb Roundtree	Katahdin Region Higher Education Center
Alan Dickey	Northern Penobscot Technical Center
Rep. Henry Joy	State Representative

Presque Isle (7/20/07)

Jane Towle	RE/MAX
Alton Haitt	Coca-Cola
Walt Elish	APP
Durward Huffman	Maine Community College System
Rep. Patricia Sutherland	State Representative
Vicki Smith	Katahdin Trust
Phil Bosse	Office of Senator Susan Collins
Nancy Chandler	MPS
Barbara Hayslett	Office of Congressman Michael Michaud
Robert Clark	Northern Maine Development Commission
Roy Hews	TDBanknorth
Tom Umphrey	TAMC
Dave Peterson	TAMC
Dick Engels	Bemis & Rossignol
Gary Cleaves	Maine Military Authority
Gregg Collins	S.W. Collins, Co.
Larry LaPlante	Northern Maine Community College
Kris Doody	Cary Medical Center
William Egeler	Northern Maine Community College
Rep. Jeremy Fischer	State Representative
Jim Davis	Cary Medical Center
Rep. Peter Edgecomb	State Representative
Dennis Curley	Channel/Radio
Sen. Roger Sherman	State Senator
Sonja Fongemie	Northern Maine Community College
Jason Parent	Northern Maine Community College
Scott Johnson	The Star-Herald
Angela Gerry Thompkins	Northern Maine Community College
Alan Panches	Northern Maine Community College
Ray Gauvin	NMCC Foundation
Sandy Gauvin	NMCC Foundation

Calais (7/20/07)

Donald Rice	Department of Labor / Career Center
Scott Harriman	Town of Baileyville
Marcia Rogers	Child & Family Opportunity, Inc.
Barbara Barrett	Washington County Community College
Desiree Thompson	Washington County Community College
Cynthia Moholland	Washington County Community College
Len Lloyd	EBS Building Supply
Sen. Kevin Raye	State Senator
William Barnett	Riverside Electric
Ian Pratt	Pratt Chevrolet
Linda Corey	St. Croix Valley Chamber of Commerce

Calais (continued)

Tina Erskine	Washington County Community College
Darin McGaw	Washington County Community College
Scott Whitney	Machias Savings Bank
Harold Clossey	Sunrise County Economic Council
Jim Thompson	Downeast Heritage Museum
Dan Hollingdale	Calais Motor Inn
John Marchese	Calais Motor Inn
Cynthia Huggins	University of Maine Machias
Peter Perkins	Calais School Department
Kent Lyons	Washington County Community College
David Sousa	Washington County Community College
Charlie McAlpine	Eastern Maine Electric Co-Op

Fairfield (8/1/07)

Rep. Lisa Miller	State Representative
Frank Hample	State Planning Office
Don Poulin	Erskine Academy
Elaine Miller	School Union 52
Regina Campbell	MSAD #74
Doug Carville	Winslow High School
John Delile	Kennebec Valley Community College
Karen White	Kennebec Valley Community College
Ken Young	Kennebec Valley Council of Governments
Sen. Earle McCormick	State Senator
Peter Thompson	Kennebec Valley Chamber of Commerce
William Braun	MSAD 48
David Pease	Sebasticook Valley Hospital
David Holden	TDBanknorth
Michael Cormier	MSAD 9
Scott Bullock	Maine General Health
Dick Willette	Redington Fairview Hospital
Ray Richard	Kennebec Valley C.A.P.
Dean Baker	MSAD 49
Mark Campbell	MSAD 49
Don Reiter	Waterville Public Schools
Clyde Dyar	Teague Biotechnology Center
Connie Brown	Augusta Schools
Keith Gunning	Bangor Savings Bank
Beau Mears	Northeast Laboratory Services
Kathy Moore	Kennebec Valley Community College
Anita Dunham	Skowhegan Career Center
Sandra Cavanaugh	Augusta Career Center
Rep. Patrick Flood	State Representative
Rep. William Browne	State Representative

Fairfield (continued)

Rep. Edward Finch	State Representative
John Dalton	Inland Hospital
Paul Blanchette	Town of Fairfield
John Butera	Central Maine Growth Council
Rosie Bradley	Town of Fairfield

North Berwick (9/13//07)

Rep. Sarah Lewin	State Representative
Jamie Goodwin	Conifer Consulting
Kevin Reilley	Benchmark Construction
Barbara Low	Low, Inc.
Roberta Orsini	Town of South Berwick
Dotty Leavitt	William Arthur, Inc.
Rep. Kathleen Chase	State Representative
Tami Gower	York County Community College
Rep. Bonnie Gould	State Representative
Ed McDonough	Wells-Ogunquit CSD
Rep. Joan Nass	State Representative
Sen. Richard Nass	State Senator
Dwayne Morin	Town of North Berwick
Rep. Don Pilon	State Representative
Rep. Walt Wheeler	State Representative
Mark Green	Town of Sanford
Martha Muldoon	Kennebunk Savings Bank
Geoff Titherington	Bonanza Steak House
Tim Hussey	Hussey Seating
Chris Magnuson	Wasco Products, Inc.
Adrian Ayotte	Architectural Glazing Technology
Janice Goldsberry	Sanford School Department
Doug Coombs	Ocean Bank
Darlene Stromstad	Goodall Hospital
Henry Scipione	York School Department
Will Armitage	Biddeford-Saco Area EDC
Charles Bates	General Dynamics
Tim Dunne	YCCC Foundation

Rockland (9/20/07)

Rep. Chris Rector	State Representative
Stacey Palmer	Maine Marine Trade Association
Claire Adams	Camden/Rockport Chamber of Commerce
Bob Peabody	Town of Rockport
Bob Hastings	Penobscot Bay Regional Chamber of Commerce
Charles Newton	Penquis
Rep. Edward Mazurek	State Representative
Jason Philbrook	Midcoast Internet Solutions
Rep. David Miramant	State Representative
Karen White	Kennebec Valley Community College
Bruce Davis	Kennebec Valley Community College
Daran Deran	Kennebec Valley Community College
Marianne Doyle	Midcoast School of Technology
Abby Manahan	Midcoast School of Technology
Tim Hawthorne	Midcoast School of Technology
Mike Weatherwax	Five Town CSD
Christina Kinney	Camden/Rockport Chamber of Commerce

Auburn (9/27/07)

Guy Desjardins	Androscoggin Sheriff
Judy Wilder	Central Maine Community College
Greg Gill	Town of Sabattus
Jason Libby	Poland Spring Preservation Society
L. J. McPeake	Retired
Celeste Yakawonis	Town of Turner
Diane Dostie	Central Maine Community College
Dave Griffiths	School Union 29
John Geismar	Town of Minot Planning Board
Rhonda Irish	Town of Minot
Martin Puckett	Town of Livermore Falls
Rep. Elaine Makas	State Representative
Rep. Dick Wagner	State Representative
Rep. Deborah Simpson	State Representative
Rep. Gary Knight	State Representative
Barbara Owen	Central Maine Community College
Roger Philippon	Central Maine Community College

South Paris (10/9/07)

Barbara Livingston	Central Maine Community College
Roger Philippon	Central Maine Community College
Mark Eastman	Oxford Hills School Department
Sen. David Hastings	State Senator
Rep. Sawin Millett	State Representative
Jim Trundy	WMCA / Career Center
Ted Davis	Telstar High School
Brad Cummings	Maine Machine Products
Rep. Terry Hayes	State Representative

Strong (10/10/07)

Rick Dorian	LEAP, Inc.
Greg Davis	Town of Kingfield
Alison Hagerstrom	Greater Franklin
Irv Faunce	Western Maine Community Action
Jeff Mitchell	Village Realty, Inc.
Mike Cormier	MSAD 9
Ray Therrien	MSAD 9
Roger Philippon	Central Maine Community College
Randall Lee	Central Maine Community College
Fen Fowler	Western Maine Community Action
Doug Dunlap	Wilton
Brenda Clark	Verso Paper
Lisa Park Laflin	Healthy Community Coalition
Leah Binder	FCHN
Freida Smith	AWAP
Caitlin Carson-Gabriel	Central Maine Community College
Peggy Willihan	Verso Paper
Quenten Clark	MSAD 58
Rep. Tom Saviello	State Representative
Gary Perlson	MSAD 58 Adult Education
Aimee DesRoches	AWAP

Damariscotta (10/11/07)

Cathy Cole	Miles Health Care
Andy Hamblet	Boothbay Region YMCA
Amy Winston	Lincoln County Economic Development
J. Theodore Repa	Seaside College Consortium
Sen. Dana Dow	State Senator
Stephen Cole	CEI
Bill Blodgett	Lincoln County Commissioner

Damariscotta (continued)

Randall Lee	Central Maine Community College
Cindy Leavitt	Miles Memorial Hospital
Rep. Jon McKane	State Representative
Ellen Dickens	School Union 74 Adult Education
Scott Shott	Miles Health Care
Stacey Miller	Miles Health Care
Wendy Roberts	Miles – Cove’s Edge
Thom Gregg	Miles Health Care Board
John Anderson	Town of Boothbay
Kitty Gregg	Miles Health Care Board
Ken Mason	Lincoln County Sheriff’s Office
Judy McGuire	Miles Health Care
Ann Wilkie	St. Andrews Hospital

Naples (10/18/07)

Jim Durrell	Krainin Real Estate
Micah Nicmy	Town of Bridgton
Cathy Walz	Bonny Eagle Adult Education
Sen. David Hastings	State Senator
Sen. Lois Snowe-Mello	State Senator
Susan Williams	Southern Maine Community College
John Donovan	Sacopee Valley High School
Pat White	Town of Fryeburg
Rosie Schacht	Lake Region Vocational Center
Steve McFarland	Windham Adult Education
Rep. Mark Bryant	State Representative
Paul Penna	Gray-New Gloucester High School
Rob Beecher	Lake Region Vocational Center
Janet Sortor	Southern Maine Community College
Kevin Murphy	R. J. Grondin & Sons
Scott Beatty	Southern Maine Community College
Robert Weimont	Southern Maine Community College
Zane Clement	MSAD 61 and MSAD 72 Regional Adult Education
Carl Landry	Sacopee Valley High School

Richmond (10/19/07)

Carolyn Farkas-Noe	Southern Midcoast Maine Chamber
Susan Williams	Southern Maine Community College
Alice Kirkpatrick	Maine Community College System
Steven Schafer	Southern Maine Community College
Darryl Sterling	Town of Richmond
James Goodall	Richmond
Michael Wing	Richmond High School
Burt Batty	Town of Richmond
Mike Brown	Newman Concrete Services
Janet Sortor	Southern Maine Community College
Seth Goodall	Attorney; Town of Richmond
Antoinette Mancusi	Coastal Counties Workforce, Inc.
Sen. Paula Benoit	State Senator
Rep. Seth Berry	State Representative
Bob Paskal	Adult Education

Belfast (10/31/07)

Bruce Mailloux	MSAD 34
Darrell Gilman	Belfast Adult Education
Rep. Robert Walker	State Representative
Sheila Muldoon	Belfast Career Center
Pat Hughes	MSAD 3 Adult Education
Vaughn Stinson	Maine Tourism Association
Rep. Jayne Giles	State Representative
Rep. Michael Thibodeau	State Representative
Sen. Carol Weston	State Senator
Joseph Slocum	City of Belfast
Charlie Mitchell	Maine Community College System
Melanie Arsenault	Maine Development Foundation

Ellsworth (11/7/07)

Rep. James Schatz	State Representative
Anne Gibson	Gibson Financial Solutions
Gary Fortier	City of Ellsworth
Michelle Beal	City of Ellsworth
Alan Baker	Ellsworth American, Inc.
Britt Urh-Morse	Child and Family Opportunities, Inc.
Tim King	Hancock County C.A.P.
Andrea McGill-O'Rourke	Blue Hill Hospital
Rep. Robert Crosthwaite	State Representative
Sen. Dennis Damon	State Senator

Bangor (11/7/07)

Tom Lizotte	Mayo Regional Hospital
Arthur Comstock	Camden National Bank
Joe Cyr	Cyr Bus
Nelson Durgin	Phillips-Strickland House
Candy Guerette	Bangor Region Chamber of Commerce
Wanda O'Brien Lunn	EMCC Foundation
Deborah Jordan	Merrill Bank
Steve Jacobson	Webber Energy Fuels
Janet Brann	AIG
Kay Lebowitz	EMCC Foundation
Fred Woodman	United Technologies Center
Tom Violette	Eastern Maine Health System
Herbert Sargent	Sargent Corporation
Rosemary Winslow	Office of Congressman Michael Michaud
Carol Woodcock	Office of Senator Susan Collins
Darcy Main-Boyington	City of Brewer
Gail Kelly	Office of Senator Olympia Snowe
Judy Horan	WLBZ 2
Debbie Johnson	Eastern Maine Medical Center
J. David Hughes	Epstein Commercial Real Estate
Carol Epstein	Epstein Commercial Real Estate
Sen. Richard Rosen	State Senator
Martin Arsenault	Howard Tool Co.
Tony DeFeo	Bangor
Amy McLellan	Dawson Commercial Real Estate
Dick Campbell	Dick Campbell, LLC
Raymond Cota	Webber Oil Company
John Rohman	WBRC Architects
Rep. David Richardson	State Representative

Appendix B: Additional Recommendations and Suggestions

Nearly 400 Maine people participated in the MCCS rural meetings and offered constructive suggestions about how the state's community colleges might play an even greater role in workforce and economic development in their area of the state. Many of their recommendations are contained in the report, others are included here to provide a broader sense of the interests and concerns expressed during the meetings. Among the suggestions:

Provide more certificate level programming for direct care workers in healthcare. Employers are under pressure to bring employees along because of new state mandates.

Incorporate regional needs/strengths into colleges' business programs. (For example, in Piscataquis County this might mean a focus on the creative economy because of the presence and growth of the Maine Highlands Guild.)

Retain the independence/autonomy of the colleges' off-campus centers.

Build more bridges with high school.

Be flexible with training resources for those who become dislocated.

Partner more with adult education.

Focus on workforce needs of all of healthcare, including the business of health care (nursing home administration, home health, etc.), not just nursing.

Offer grant writing seminars.

Need for services to help students identify what they want to do earlier in life.

Expand centers and perhaps even add dormitories—could serve as an economic engine to drive people toward rural areas.

More programming to engage senior populations (similar to senior colleges)—a good opportunity to connect people to your college for ongoing support.

Establish internships and coop experiences to entice young people into the trades and into business.

Offer sales training, with an emphasis on customer service.

Provide early college planning to parents to ensure that higher education is on their radar. Consider classes/seminars for parents who have not gone to college in order to help them engage their children in higher education. Mentoring: engage families as a whole unit through early intervention.

Establish a bank of volunteers (retirees in particular) who could perhaps assist students with applying for federal financial aid, etc.

Use retirees as teachers.

KVCC needs dormitories to attract students from away.

Provide training in life skills: how to interview, how to write a business letter and resume.

Consider a certificate program for opticians.

Consider a statewide, comprehensive on-line resource (for adults and youth) that would show career clusters, with links to education and career resources so people can understand what the demand and requirements are for workers in a particular area.

Work more closely with guidance counselors to raise aspirations and knowledge of what the community colleges have to offer and of what sectors of the economy are most in need of skilled workers. Help connect industry to high school schools.

Sponsor a community college bus tour for guidance counselors and educators to learn more about local colleges and businesses.

Consider “seed” money for establishing new programs in order to be more responsive to a region’s needs.

Need medical laboratory program.

Need a community college in the mid-coast.

Increase community events on campus, makes people more comfortable with the idea of being on a college campus.

Expand summer programming to bring more young people to the college campuses and expose them to what the colleges have to offer.

Partner more with vocational centers at the high school.

Design curriculum to meet local needs. Entry level labor needs.

Independents feel plumbing is a dying trade. We need to do more to support the industry.

Seek a mandate from the state level, with advocacy from the community colleges, that both sides of public education sit down together (applied technology and academic prep) to ensure that students are both college ready and career ready upon graduation.

Create a career placement database at the system level, containing information for graduates and alumni that connects them with employers/available jobs. Employers become frustrated when contacting individual colleges because not sure who to talk to.

How about offering the first two years of college for free?