

## University of Maine Career Center

Annual Report 2019-2020

Submitted by Crisanne Kadamus Blackie, Director, June 15, 2020

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### Executive Summary

As the academic year 2019-2020 concludes, we find ourselves in a place for reflection as the Covid-19 pandemic has changed the way we function. We went from the lowest unemployment rate in many years to the highest unemployment rate in a matter of weeks. This year has been a lesson in agility and resilience. The Career Center staff successfully navigated the transition in delivering remote services in a matter of days, we did not have any down time during this transition period and continued to meet with students. We were able to navigate this transition due to our continual professional development, training and ability to embrace change. It is easy to focus on the pandemic however, that should not overshadow the majority of the year.

### Highlights

- Hosted the largest Engineering Job Fair and Career Fairs in our history with excellent student attendance.
- Internship programming was expanded with the regular meeting of the Internship Collaborative and the engagement of faculty and employers.
- A redesign of the check-in process at the Engineering Job Fair and the Career Fair streamlined the check-in process, reduced wait time and created compliance with the entrance way of the New Balance Recreation Center.
- Over \$50,000 in scholarships were awarded to health professions students.
- An expansion of partnership programming with the University of Maine System institutions provided access to CareerLink, our employment management system, to University of Maine at Presque Isle (UMPI) and University of Maine at Fort Kent (UMFK) students.
- Continued to provide University of Maine at Machias students access to resources.
- During the Covid-19 crisis our response included:
  - Offered remote appointments to students
  - Added a chat feature to our website
  - Delivered live and pre-recorded workshops to academic classes
  - Enhanced workforce development efforts through the development of the “Your Future Begins Today” micro-credential program
  - Assisted the University of Maine Graduate School with a workshop series
  - Expanded social media presence through daily postings, video interviews with employers, alumni, healthcare providers and campus partners
  - Provided career coaching services to alumni

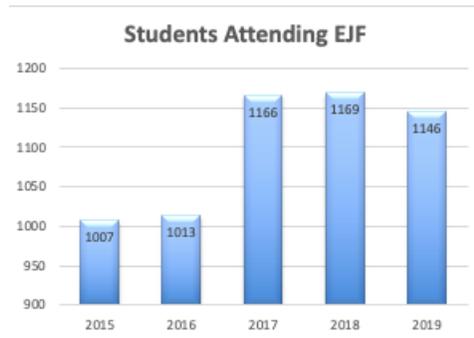
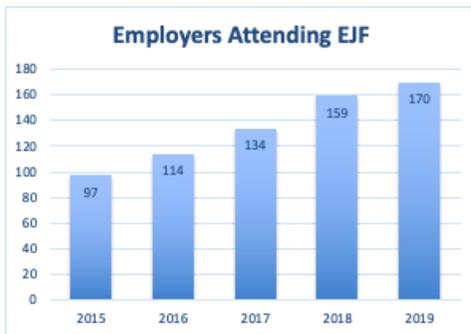
## Career Center Overview

The University of Maine Career Center’s mission is to “engage and educate students in their career development process”. Our services range from individual appointment with students, classroom presentations and workshops, employer relations, workforce and internship development, and campus partnership programs. We work with all students from incoming to alumni. Our highly credentialed staff continue to develop their skill set through professional development activities that has allowed us to continually innovate and respond to change.

### Employer Relations and Workforce Development

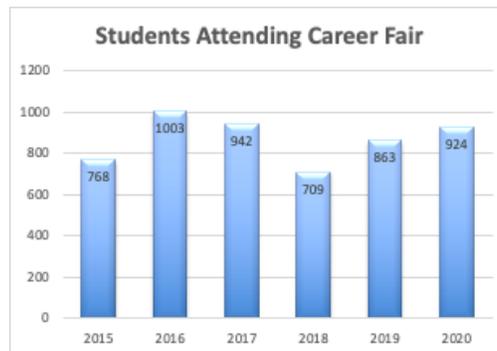
The academic year 2019-2020 was a year that went from one of the best economies to one of the worst economies. It has presented the students and staff with both celebration and challenges that has resulted in reflection, agility and resilience. We started the year with CareerFest, a kickoff event, taking place in the Mall, under a large tent. This fun and festive event is a chance for students to meet with employers informally to talk about their career development and build career ready skills. September continued with partnerships with the Maine Business School from their Experiencing Business Casually to Firm Night, a networking event for accounting students. This was followed by the Accounting Interview Day where 40 students participate in on-campus interviews for both fulltime positions and internships.

Recruitment is in full swing starting in October. The 21st Annual Engineering Job Fair (EJF) brought 170 companies to campus, exceeding the previous year by eleven. Additional recruiting activities were pre-scheduled for some organizations. Seven held on-campus information sessions immediately following the fair. Sixteen companies conducted on-campus interviews the day following the EJF and one company the day before for a total 125 interviews. We have been pleased to welcome the assistance of employers who are willing to meet with students and share their expertise on resume writing, LinkedIn and developing a “pitch”. The interview day started with a power outage and delayed opening of campus as a result of a wind and rain storm. After a bit of confusion that morning, the interviews were held and recruiter evaluation feedback was overwhelmingly positive.



The spring semester began with the largest Career Fair yet, with 175 employers registered. This large event filled the New Balance Recreation Center with over 1000 students in attendance. At both the Career Fair and the Engineering Job Fair we implemented a new check-in process that

reduced wait times and entrance congestion. There were 25 on-campus interviews the day after the Career Fair. After these larger events, employers may choose to spend additional time on campus either meeting with classes or offering information sessions. These next day events engaged several hundred additional students.



Our employment management system, CareerLink, had 17,671 total registered students for 2019-2020 and 6,937 registered employers. This system provides employment listings for full-time, part-time positions, internships, and student employment. It is through this system that we manage all employer and recruitment activities. Students registered in CareerLink receive targeted job blasts and announcements. The on-campus interview total (from both fairs) and the phone and video interviews conducted was 382, a 26% increase from last year; there were 129 On-Campus Recruitment schedules this year, an increase of 69 schedules from 2018-2019.

The internship data from the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) indicate that approximately 75% of students who complete an internship are hired by that company. We have encouraged students to participate in internships and have engaged with faculty around this topic. Our Internship Collaborative meets each semester to receive updates regarding employers, regulations and options for students. Our spring meeting included an opportunity for employers and faculty to engage in conversation about the best ways to assist students. Our Internship Guide is posted on the Career Center website for students, faculty, and employers to view.

Many internships this summer have been canceled or moved to remote work. In an effort to support students who may be challenged with internship completion or need support, we have encouraged students to participate in the FOCUS Maine workshop series, offered additional resources around remote experiences, and encouraged participation in the “Your Future Begins Today” micro-credential program.

## Health Professions

Our health professions students continue to find success during this academic year. Through the Tufts University School of Medicine Maine Track Early Assurance Program, we have two students who have been accepted to attend medical school in the fall of 2021. For this year’s pool of sophomore applicants, we had six students apply, ranging in majors from Biomedical Engineering to Biochemistry. Of our six applicants, two students were invited for interviews. Due to COVID-19, their interviews will be happening in Fall 2020.

This year, we focused on the collection and evaluation of assessment data. When collecting data from 2015-2019, we have learned that our students have a greater chance of being accepted with a GPA of 3.5 or higher and/or an MCAT score of 508 or higher. Students have the best chance of getting accepted with the combination of a high GPA and a high MCAT score. Once those two factors start to lower, the percentages of acceptances begin to decrease. Other factors of the application do hold weight in a student's acceptance, but the data shows how significant the GPA and MCAT are in an application.

MCAT and GPA Acceptance Rates				
MCAT	GPA	# Applied	# Accepted	Acceptance Rate
> or = 508	> or = 3.5	28	15	54%
< 508	> or = 3.5	59	14	24%
> or = 508	< 3.5	6	1	17%
< 508	< 3.5	38	11	29%
> or = 508		34	16	47%
<508		99	38	38%
	> or = 3.5	99	54	55%
	< 3.5	46	13	28%

Our students during this year’s application cycle have experienced some challenges with COVID-19 restrictions. Entrance exam test dates have been canceled or rescheduled into the summer. Many students have decided to delay their application due to these challenges and have decided to take a gap year. The majority of current applicants are alumni.

During the academic year, Pre-Health Breakfast Breaks were offered monthly to provide an opportunity for students to informally chat with the STEM and Health Professions Career Counselor about varying topics. In addition, “virtual drop-in hours” were available twice a week for quick chats with students that were unable to meet during in-person Walk-Ins or able to schedule an appointment. As a result of COVID-19, outreach to health professions students continued with the “Sit and Sip” online video series on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Alumni from the healthcare field talked about their position and the impact of COVID-19 on their role.

Our Health Professions Committee continues to advocate for this office and our students. This year, due to the transition of students learning remotely and navigating that transition, we pushed back the deadline of the scholarship applications to the end of finals week. Over \$50,000 in scholarships were awarded. We are proud and thankful that we are able to support our students in this capacity.

### Pre-Law

Over the past couple of years, we have renewed success in working with pre-law students. The Pre-Law Club has been active and engagement with pre-law students has increased.

Data collected from the Law School Admissions Council reflects the 2018 applicant pool. About 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of applicants are undergraduate students. The majority of our law school applicants are alumni and the Career Center continues to be available to these applicants. Of these applicants approximately 71% were accepted. University of Maine School of Law continues to be most highly attended law school for our students and alumni.



### **Maine Mentor Program**

Our connections this year through the Maine Mentor database as well as other referrals was 43 students. We know that informational interviews and connections to UMaine alumni and Maine residents is a very important offering of the Career Center. While the process of updating the database continues, the Career Center has additionally supported this venture through personal connections in the community and by creating new connections to be added to the database.

### **Explorations**

This marked our second year of partnering with the Explorations program and CLAS to provide early career counseling to our undecided and pre-engineering students. Twenty-one sections of the EXP 100 joined us in the Career Center for an overview of our services. As a follow-up to the visit, students in some sections were required, while others were encouraged, to meet with a Career Counselor. We met with 150 Explorations/Pre-Engineering students during the fall semester as a direct result of this partnership. Many of these students scheduled a follow-up.

The diversity of appointment activities is as diverse as our students and their stories. Utilizing a hybrid Career Counseling/Career Coaching approach with a blend of Holland's Theory of Career Choice and Planned Happenstance, we placed an emphasis on exploring and honoring the students' own values as we looked at majors and careers. Some students were intent on choosing a major, others wanted to learn more about careers. Some were motivated to make a choice soon, others wanted to take their time to explore. We met students where they were at and explored majors, careers, opportunities, goals and possibilities. We used both formal and informal assessments, had conversations around family and cultural norms and values, and explored both dream careers and practical choices. During these appointments, we assessed the student's overall adjustment to college life and their connection to our campus. We referred students to many campus resources including the Bodwell and Counseling Centers, connected them with both formal and informal mentors through connections with upperclass students, faculty, staff, potential employers, local community members with expertise in their area of interest, and members of the Maine Mentor Program. By utilizing a career coaching model, each student left with an action plan outlining next steps. For some students that was to further explore a few specific majors of interest, for others it was specific steps to take to declare their chosen major.

## **Professional Development**

Members of the Career Center staff have assumed leadership roles in the Maine Career Development Association and hosted the June 2019 conference at the University of Maine. Over 100 career professionals from Maine and New England attended. Last June staff attended the Eastern Association of Colleges and Employers conference and the National Career Development Association Conference. In addition, staff participated in several webinars and online opportunities to develop and enhance our skills.

## **Response to Covid-19**

In March, due to the COVID-19 global pandemic, all on-campus services came to a halt. We were faced with the challenge of helping students remotely and working with employers who were faced with temporary closures and hiring freezes. We responded with a strategic approach:

- Delivered all of our services remotely
- Collaborated with University of Maine System institutions. Career Center professionals from the System institutions met weekly to share resources and best practices.
- The University of Maine Career Center welcomed UMFK and UMPI students along with UMM and UM students into CareerLink, providing increased access to this resource.
- Increased our social media presence with posting interviews with employers, alumni and campus partners that offered additional information to our students.
- Partnered with Alumni Relations to offer free career coaching services to alumni.
- Offered a workshop series in conjunction with the UMaine Graduate School for perspective graduate students.
- Participated in Zoom, Kaltura and Brightspace trainings.
- Connected with the New England Career Center networks providing students access to virtual programming offered by member institutions.
- The Career Centers, system wide, partnered with Education Design Lab to offer a free micro-credential program called “Your Future Begins Today”. Due to changes in an internship or summer job, this program helps to provide students with an opportunity to reflect on their resiliency while learning skills to add to their employment narrative.

As we move into the next academic year, we will continue to evaluate and be flexible in our delivery of services. We have learned a great deal about how to effectively deliver services remotely and look forward to how we can integrate these delivery methods into our program.

The Career Center is a proud member of The Division of Student Life, University of Maine.  
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Cindy Trimm, Career Services Coordinator

Janice Madore, Administrative Specialist

Caryn Boutaugh, Graduate Assistant

Naomi Caywood, Special Projects

## **Key Program Areas/Services within the Career Center**

**Career Counseling and Coaching:** career exploration, choice of major, choice of career, internship preparation, job search strategies and career and/or graduate school decision-making

**Career Assessments:** formal, informal, and online

**Career Resource Library:** technology center, books, handouts, and the Career Center website

**Career Fairs:** Career Fair, Engineering Job Fair, and CareerFest

**Classes/Seminars/Workshops:** for academic classes, student organizations and groups

**Specialized Career Programs:** workshops, panels, networking events, and career cluster events

**Resume Reviews:** from first-time resume writers to PhD candidates crafting a curriculum vita

**Mock Interviews and Interview Coaching:** to help students prepare for job, medical and graduate school interviews

**Maine Mentor Program:** matches students with alumni career mentors to provide job shadowing, career information, and advice

**Web-based Services:** UMaine Career Center website, Live Chat, CareerLink, online resources and links to social media platforms

**Job/Internship Listings** via CareerLink

**On-campus Recruiting/Job Interviews**

**Health, Legal Professions and Graduate School** advising and resources

**Alumni Career Services**

## Points of Pride

- Expanded usage of the interactive technology in the Career Center Library to provide enhanced in-person and online programming to University of Maine and University of Maine at Machias students.
- Delivered 123 career-related presentations to 4664 students in academic classes and student organizations.
- Collaborated with the University of Maine at Presque Isle and University of Maine at Fort Kent to include their students in CareerLink, our employment management system, now providing access to those students in addition to University of Maine and University of Maine at Machias students.
- Increased collaborations with academics and other departments through joint programming including our career cluster events.
- Coordinated the largest Career Fair in Maine; 175 organizations attended and the largest Engineering Job Fair in the Maine; 170 organizations attended.
- Prepared 6 sophomores to interview with the Tufts Maine Track Early Assurance Program. This is a highly competitive program where only 6 students from Maine colleges and universities are accepted. Acceptances are pending as of publication date.
- Became a touch point for Explorations students. These students met with a member of the Career Center staff to assist them with exploring their career development.
- Continued an active, engaging Career Center presence on Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn with over 8,000 followers.
- Credentialed Career Center staff that meets national standards who continue to participate in national, state and regional professional development activities.
- Hosted the Maine Career Development Conference.

## **Career Center Goals for 2020-2021**

- Implement virtual career related events and presentations
- Expand partnerships and programming with the career centers in the other University of Maine System institutions
- Partner with the University of Maine at Machias to deliver joint programming
- Develop a plan to deliver services upon re-entry to campus
- Launch 1<sup>st</sup> virtual Engineering Job Fair
- Continue to collect and assess data related to students' usage of the Career Center
- Craft a strategic plan focusing on the expansion of available internship opportunities
- Offer 2 sections of INT 192, *Introduction to Career Development*

# Organizational Chart ♦ Career Center, University of Maine 2019-20

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## Division of Student Life

Vice President for Student Life & Dean of Students  
Robert Dana



**Director, Career Center**  
Crisanne Blackie

<p><b>Assistant Director, Employer Relations</b> Kate Axelsen Foster</p>	<p><b>Career Counselor</b> BJ Roach</p>	<p><b>Career Counselor</b> Lisa Carter</p>	<p><b>Career Counselor STEM/Health Professions</b> Samantha Wheeler</p>	<p><b>Career Services Coordinator</b> Cindy Trimm</p>	<p><b>Administrative Specialist</b> Janice Madore</p>
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Caryn Boutaugh, **Graduate Assistant**  
 Kate Lonardo, **Graduate Assistant**  
 Naomi Caywood, **Graduate Student/Counselor**  
 Kristin Cosgrove, **Graduate Intern**

Sadie Backstrom, **Career Assistant**  
 Oyindamola Balogun, **Career Assistant**  
 Danielle Donadio, **Career Assistant**  
 Carl Harris, **Career Assistant**  
 Hannah Thomson, **Career Assistant**  
 Kristen Veilleux, **Career Assistant**  
 Katelynn Watson, **Career Assistant**  
 Steven White, **Career Assistant**