

## What is Jobs for Maine's Graduates (JMG)?

JMG is an independent, statewide 501c3, private, nonprofit corporation established in 1993 by the Maine Legislature. At the time, JMG was given a mandate to provide Maine students with a comprehensive dropout prevention and school-to-work transition system. Throughout the past 17 years, JMG has evolved into a progressive organization that helps young people achieve their full potential. In partnership with schools and employers, the mission of JMG is to identify students who face barriers to education, and to guide each one on to a successful path toward continued education, a meaningful career, and productive adulthood. JMG's vision is to be a champion for all Maine students who face barriers to education.

## Who are JMG students and what are the eligibility requirements?

JMG students come from all over the state and from all walks of life. The breakdown of gender is nearly 50/50 and the racial diversity of our students reflects that of Maine's general population. Students enrolled in JMG face at least four barriers to education. Some of the most common barriers include:

- Low income household (65% of JMG students)
- Struggling with family or social issues (60%)
- Underperforming academically (54%)
- High absenteeism due to a disinterest in school (51%)

These students are the most at risk for becoming "disengaged" in the education process, and yet are the least likely to be successfully served by traditional classroom environments. Schools look to JMG to serve the students who need and will benefit most from its programs.

## What does JMG do for its students?

JMG serves 4,000 students a year. In its 17-year history, JMG has provided more than 24,000 students with the skills and motivation they need to succeed. Through JMG programs, high-school and middle-school students discover their individual talents, develop skills, and seize opportunities to achieve their personal potential.

Mentoring plays a critical role in the success of JMG and the success of the students. The programs provide for plenty of one-on-one time between students and the specialists who teach them. JMG also offers a venue for students to interact with employers and community-based organizations.

## How is JMG administered and funded?

JMG has designed and implemented several programs that create school-to-life pathways starting as early as the sixth grade and ending in successful post-graduate transitions to higher education and careers.

JMG's core programs include:

- The JMG high school program is a for-credit course which serves students from 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades and continues to serve students for 12 months after they graduate.
- JMG's Project Reach program serves students in 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grades and continues to serve students who transition into the 9<sup>th</sup> grade for a full 12 months.

Additional JMG programs include:

- The JMG program at LearningWorks in Portland serves motivated students who are pursuing their high school GED through a unique life-skills training and mentoring program.
- Maine Mentoring Partnership, established by the Maine Children's Cabinet, is now a supporting organization and is working under the umbrella of JMG.
- The Opportunity Passport™ Program serves foster care youth between 14 to 23 years old. Participants are trained in financial literacy and are eligible for a matched savings account of up to \$1,000/year toward specific asset purchases, including educational items, housing, and investments.
- JMG education programs within Maine's two Youth Development Centers for incarcerated youth.
- Through a MELMAC Grant, JMG has partnered with Old Town High School to establish a College Ready Program.

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**How is JMG administered and funded?** (Continued from page 1) A full-time teaching Specialist, employed by JMG, teaches the JMG curriculum to 35-55 students (in class sizes of 10-15). The student-to-teacher ratio allows for plenty of one-on-one time. The JMG program teaches 34 core competencies comprised of six skill sets: personal skills, leadership skills, communication skills, job attainment skills, job success skills, and career development skills. Students learn about time management, personal finance, teambuilding, good work habits, and community service. The Specialists also offer students help with their other subjects.

JMG is governed by a Board of Directors which consists of up to 31 business, legislative and education leaders. JMG is funded by a variety of sources, including; the state of Maine, our school partners, private corporations, foundations and individual contributions.

### **How does JMG benefit the community?**

More JMG students (92%) graduate from high school in four years than other Maine students (80%). In 2003, 33% of JMG students pursued postsecondary education. Due to the fact that JMG is designed to help students develop a relevant plan for higher education, the number of students enrolled in postsecondary education is now 52%.

JMG prepares students to continue their education and to be valuable assets to the workforce. With Maine's workforce aging, and jobs evolving, students need to be prepared to "hit the ground running" when they enter the working world. Graduates of JMG become productive, contributing residents. Through JMG's business partners and community service projects, our students become connected to and engaged in their communities and in the state.

JMG's impact on the economy is detailed in a 2008 report released by the Maine Department of Labor's Division for Labor Market Information Services. Six years after high school, JMG graduates, on average, are making 14% more than all other 22 to 24 year olds in Maine. 88% of JMG students become successfully engaged in the workforce, military service, or continued education within the year after high school graduation.

In recognition of these accomplishments, JMG was named a "Champion of Economic Development" by the Maine Development Foundation.

### **Performance Outcomes:**

For 16 consecutive years, JMG has been recognized as the Best in The Nation because its outcomes exceed national standards for programs working with disadvantaged youth.

	<u>Maine</u>	<u>JMG</u>
• Four-year Graduation Rate	80%	90% or above
• Senior Graduation Rate	86%	95%
• Post Secondary Enrollment	57%	52%



Project Reach students and Specialists spell out "JMG" with people at the 2008 Leadership Education Conference.

For more information about Jobs for Maine's Graduates, please contact our Augusta office at 620-7180 or visit us online at [www.jmg.org](http://www.jmg.org).