

"Change does not necessarily assure progress, but progress implacably requires change. Education is essential to change, for education creates both new wants and the ability to satisfy them."

Henry S. Commager, 1902-1998
American Public Intellectual

The Maine Center for Career Preparation is a private, non-profit committed to improving the economic prospects of Maine citizens.

Improving the linkages between education and workforce development is our goal.

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Education Works!

Community College—The People Mover

By Tom Broussard

Getting Started

You have seen the so-called “people movers” at the large airports like Atlanta, Chicago and LA.

They are essentially horizontal escalators designed to help the traveler get from one place to another by whisking them along through airport corridors.

The first “people movers” were usually two parallel lanes carrying people sedately in opposite directions.

The Fast Lane

New people movers now have four lanes or more. A four lane “mover” will have two outer slower-moving lanes that allow pedestrians to hop onboard and get started.

The center two lanes are moving at a higher rate of speed and allow people to cruise along even faster.

You can't get there from here.

The interesting thing is that you cannot get onto the faster lanes without stepping up to speed gradually through the outside, slower lanes.

Those lanes then serve two important functions. First, the outer lanes get you where you want to go, faster.

Secondly, the outer lanes enable you to reach the center, higher speed lanes.

Once in the outer lane, many people will stay in it all the way. For them, the mover has served its purpose.

Others, however, move to the center faster lane. They may never have anticipated using the fast lane but once in the slow lane they find the next step that much easier. What looked too fast (maybe even dangerous) from the walkway is no longer quite as intimidating.

Einstein was right. Everything is relative.

Education as a people mover

In the modern world we have farther to go and less time to get there. It is widely appreciated that education is the “people mover” of choice. Why then, aren't more people continuing their



education?

First step in a Lifelong journey

Maine has a large number of highly respected private and public colleges and universities. But these schools are out of reach--moving too fast--for most Mainers.

Maine needs community colleges and the enabling step that they represent. The community colleges are nimble, responsive and attuned to local business and educational needs.

Everyone talks about the lifelong learning journey. But how do you get started? Like any other journey, lifelong learning starts with the first critical step, just like entering the “people mover” in the slow lane. Community colleges can help you take it. Getting started is the key.