

**University of Maine at Farmington
Partnership for Civic Advancement
Year Three Outcomes Summary/Overview**

The Partnership’s assessment process indicates that the overwhelming majority of students continue to achieve the learning outcomes desired through their experience, and community partners continue to feel they are achieving or making progress toward achieving their objectives:

- 60% of students indicating on their evaluations that they have achieved 100% of their learning objectives and 32% reporting that they feel they achieved at least 90% of their learning objectives. The lowest measurement reported was one student who felt they had only achieved 75% of the objectives they had hoped to realize.
- 73% of community partners indicate on their evaluations that they have achieved 100% of the desired/anticipated progress they wanted to achieve through sponsoring an intern; 19% report achieving 90% of the progress desired; 4% achieved at least 80% of the desired progress and the remaining 4% report achieving at least 70% of the progress they desired toward their goals or objectives.

During 2014 we added an assessment of the soft skills students develop or improve through their internship experience on the evaluation forms for both the student interns and their community sponsors during this past year. We now have a clearer idea of the extent to which students feel they are gaining important “life” or “soft” skills, as well as their community sponsors’ evaluations of their levels of improvement in these areas. The following chart provides a comparison between the students’ assessments of their level of improvement or growth in these skill areas and the development of these skills that their community sponsors noted over the course of the internship experience.

Life or Soft Skills	Greatly Improved	Improved	Somewhat Improved	Already Had Strong Skills
<u>Oral Communication</u>				
Student Assessment	22%	64%	7%	7%
Community Sponsor Assessment	17%	37%	29%	17%
<u>Written Communication</u>				
Student Assessment	22%	57%	14%	7%
Community Sponsor Assessment	12.5%	33%	42%	3%
<u>Time Management</u>				
Student Assessment	36%	43%	14%	7%
Community Sponsor Assessment	4%	50%	17%	29%
<u>Professionalism (Conduct & Appearance)</u>				
Student Assessment	0%	57%	36%	7%
Community Sponsor Assessment	0%	54%	12.5%	33.5%
<u>Responsibility</u>				
Student Assessment	57%	29%	7%	7%
Community Sponsor Assessment	8.5%	50%	12.5%	29%
<u>Initiative</u>				
Student Assessment	57%	36%	7%	0%
Community Sponsor Assessment	29%	50%	12.5%	8.5%

It is interesting to note that in nearly every area, students rated the level of their development or improvement of these skills higher than did their community sponsors. In examining comments from the evaluations from both student interns and community sponsors, it appears one explanation for this may be that the students' comfort level and confidence in utilizing the skills they already had increased during their internship experience. While they recognize that they have the skills, many have not had the opportunity to use them in a professional setting, and are not aware of how strong or developed these skills may be.

Student Learning Outcomes Overview

1. Learned how to develop and build audiences for a website and social media sites that effectively promote a business or organization.
2. Gained an understanding of different audiences and purposes for communication and public relations/marketing efforts and how to effectively write and design marketing and advertising pieces for different audiences.
3. Learned how to develop and write effective business communications delivered through a variety of avenues (reports, letters, memoranda, emails, etc.).
4. Learned how to productively farm and about local food sustainability and security in Western Maine.
5. Learned how to use graphic design tools and effectively lay out marketing pieces.
6. Gained skill and confidence with public speaking.
7. Learned how to plan and prepare land resource management plans.
8. Learned about and able to be involved in a variety of the functions involved in operating a small business including marketing, budgeting, pricing, calculating profits/revenue, providing good customer service, etc.
9. Gained an understanding of the types of challenges a non-profit faces routinely, as well as those resulting from restructuring.
10. Gained experience in grant writing, different processes for different funder types, and understanding of complexity of the process.
11. Learned about and gained hands-on experience in coalition operations and skills for effective community collaborations.
12. Gained experience in the financial planning business, including personal financial planning strategies for people at different stages in their lives and with different financial needs and goals.
13. Learned about and gained hands-on experience in recycling/upcycling/sustainability and learned how to implement and sustain a community-based program.
14. Increased practical skills, including for example: utilizing GPS, mapping, strategic planning, how to work as part of a team, time management skills, customer service skills, etc.
15. Increased/improved communication, analytical, decision-making, and leadership skills.
16. Gained real-world research experience.
17. Improved analytical skills.
18. First-hand experience in linking communities together, gained understanding of the importance and value of such efforts.
19. Valuable networking in community in areas in which anticipate making career.
20. Gained hands-on experience in a variety of functions essential to the ski industry, including marketing, events planning, communications, business operations, customer service, etc.

Community Partner Outcomes Overview

1. Helped achieve public education/visibility/involvement/support goals of organizations and businesses:
 - Increased public awareness support and involvement in both the environmental and socioeconomic benefits of conservation
 - Increased public awareness of invasive aquatic plants
 - Increased youth engagement in environmental/conservation projects
 - Increased public awareness of non-profits in community and their roles
 - Promote understanding of resources available in the region, and other resources that could benefit the region
 - Increased capacity of non-profit organizations (through membership activities, writing grants, compiling research for future grant submissions and other solicitations, and planning, coordinating and conducting fundraising events)
 - Expanded marketing efforts within community through events, websites, social media, media coverage
2. Wrote, designed and did layout for Franklin County's 2013-2014 Welcome Guide, helping the Chamber of Commerce promote our region as a 4-Season destination while also promoting the interests of its membership.
3. Developed a digital resource binder for a regional non-profit organization, making access to all available resources and updating this resource listing easier and less time-consuming.
4. Completed a photography and mapping project to assist in protecting ecologically sensitive areas/habitats.
5. Assisted in performing compliance inspections for the Maine DEP.
6. Provided vital data acquisition and analysis for the Environmental Geology program of Maine DEP, which turned into a undergraduate research project on road salt contamination of surface and groundwater.
7. Developed and implemented a new recreation program for the UpWard Bound program.
8. Assisted in protecting environmental resources through monitoring and surveying activities, invasive aquatic plant removal efforts, and through educational and outreach programs in the community.
9. Ensured continuation of an after school program in a rural area and expanded the offerings to include cultural activities (i.e., music, theater).
10. Conducted economic analysis of adult education programming data to determine return on investment for the community and funding sources.
11. Improved public access to preserved/maintained properties/conservation easements, etc. through new and/or improved signage, new or improved websites, building and improving trail networks, assessing trail conditions, generating necessary information and GPS maps, producing plans to improve and expand trail networks, and developing land use management plans for conserved lands.
12. Assisted regional historical societies and museums to inventory and archive holdings and make them more accessible to the public.
13. Assisted with projects and/or tasks important to the mission and goals of the organization
14. Developed a stronger and improved partnership with UMF.
15. Increased ability to undertake special projects affecting the community or to strengthen and/or expand organization's capacity.