

# 2022 Competitive Skills Scholarship Brief

Since 2007, the Competitive Skills Scholarship Program (CSSP) has helped more than 3,200 low-income Mainers attain the skills necessary to thrive in our state’s economy and help meet employer demand for a trained workforce. CSSP provides postsecondary education; training for degrees and industry-recognized credentials including those gained through Registered Apprenticeships; and other essential supports that support participants’ entry into high-wage, in-demand jobs in Maine. The program increases an individual’s ability to fully participate in Maine’s workforce, to earn family-supporting wages, and to contribute more robustly to Maine’s economy by encouraging lifelong learning and credential attainment.

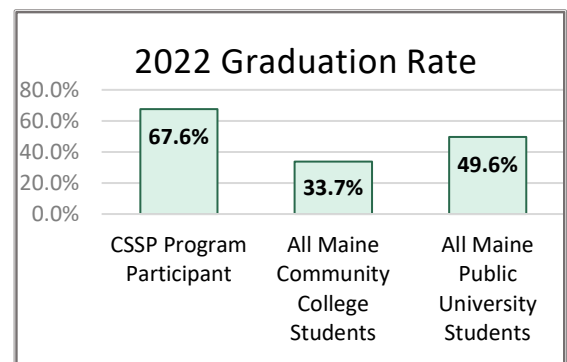
CSSP is funded through a small (.02%) assessment on Maine employers who contribute to the Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund. An employer’s unemployment tax is reduced by the amount paid into CSSP, as required by Title 26 §1221 sub-§4-A of Maine statute. The investment in CSSP participants to gain the skills needed to obtain good-paying and sustainable jobs will help reduce recurring need for and dependency on unemployment compensation and similar benefit programs.

## 2022 Program Outcomes

### Improved Graduation Rates

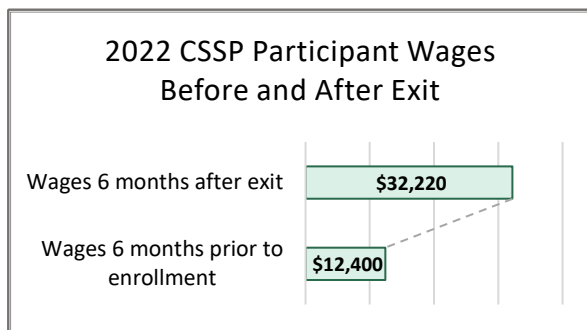
In 2022, 361 individuals were enrolled in and served by the CSSP program. One hundred and eleven of these participants exited the program in the past year, with 75 of them (67.6%) having successfully gained their degree or credential in a high wage/in demand field.

- 33.7% of students enrolled in Maine’s community colleges completed their degree within four years.
- 49.6% of students enrolled in Maine’s four-year public college and university programs completed their degree within six years.



[HTTPS://COLLEGESCORECARD.ED.GOV/](https://collegescorecard.ed.gov/)

### Increased Wages



Of those who exited the CSSP program within the last 18 months, average six-month wages increased from approximately \$12,400 in the six months before enrollment to \$32,220 in the six months following completion.

This gain is further supported by the most recently available wage record data for 2021/2022 CSSP completers, who increased their quarterly wages 2.6 times their wages from before completing the program. This represents a nearly \$40,000 increase annually.



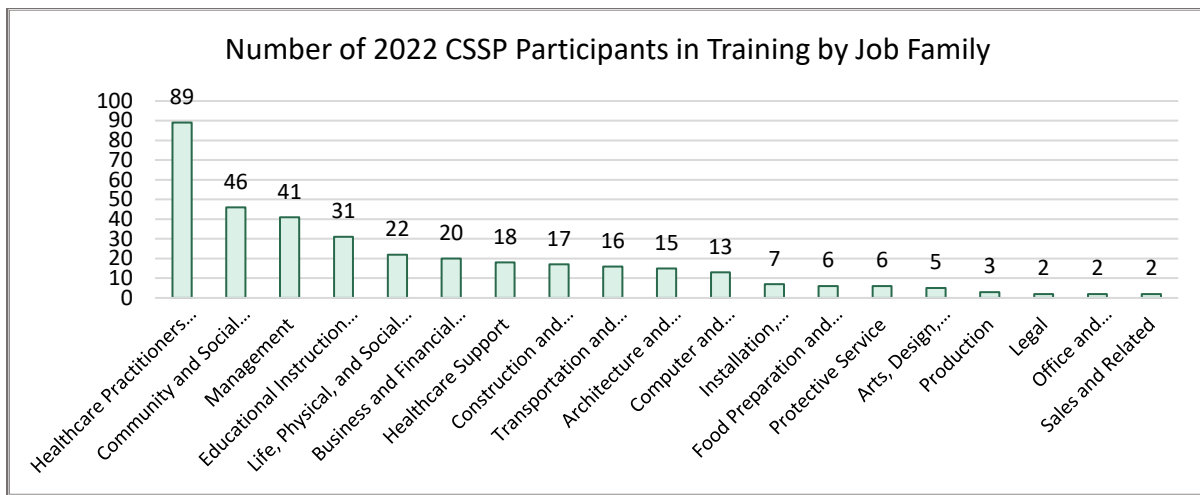
**Bahn** left Ethiopia with his younger brother in 2014. He worried he could not care for his sibling while also pursuing higher education. Bahn overcame his doubts and applied for CSSP, which supported English as a Second Language classes at USM before transitioning to a degree program in Information Technology. Bahn completed his program and obtained full-time employment with Idexx Laboratories as a **Cyber Security Consultant**, earning \$24.00 an hour with health and dental insurance, holiday, sick and vacation time.

## 2022 CSSP Enrollee Demographics

**2022 participants in the CSSP program represent residences across all 16 counties of Maine.** The top 5 counties of enrollment are Cumberland (60), Washington (56), Androscoggin (51), Penobscot (42) and Aroostook (41).

<b>Average Household Size</b>	2.9 household members		
<b>Average Participant Age</b>	29 years old		
<b>Households with 4+ members</b>	134 participant households		
<b>Sex of Participant</b> <i>(male, female, non-binary, prefer not to disclose)</i>	242 female 118 male 3 not provided		
<b>Unemployed at Enrollment</b>	71%		
<b>Ethnicity</b>	12 Hispanic		
<b>Race</b>	4 American Indian/Alaskan Native 1 Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	10 Asian/Asian American 5 more than one race	77 Black or African American 269 White/Caucasian

While many 2022 participants are working toward careers as Registered Nurses, Counselors and Social Workers, and Teachers, the program also reflects significant interest from aspiring Engineers, Accountants, Biologists, IT Specialists, Managers, Electricians, Chefs, and CDL Drivers.



## 2022 CSSP Program Financials

CSSP expenditures in calendar year 2022 were just over \$1.7 million. The ratio of case management to training and other supports changed from prior years since other funding sources that became available for pandemic recovery were available to assist CSSP participants. Because of this added cost-sharing, training and support services are lower than in past years. Information on how much the other programs contributed is not available, as not all are administered by the Department.

### Average Annual Cost Per Person

Category	All CSSP
<b>Number of Trainees Served in 2022</b>	<b>361</b>
Training Costs	\$1,343.96
Support Services	\$848.30
Case management, Counseling, Admin.	\$2,617.11
<b>Average Annual Cost Per Person</b>	<b>\$4,809.37</b>



**Shawna**, a 47-year-old mother in Caribou, worked in the food industry as a server and bartender earning \$750 weekly before being laid off. Her dream was to become a **Registered Nurse** through the University of Maine Presque Isle program. CSSP assisted with support including partial tuition, books, training tools and supplies, uniforms, mileage, and licensing and testing fees. She is now a Clinical Nurse earning \$32.45/hr with a \$5,000 sign on bonus at Maine Health Medical Center.

*Maine CareerCenters are equal opportunity providers. Auxiliary aids and services are available to individuals with disabilities upon request.*