

What is the MaineSpark Navigator network?

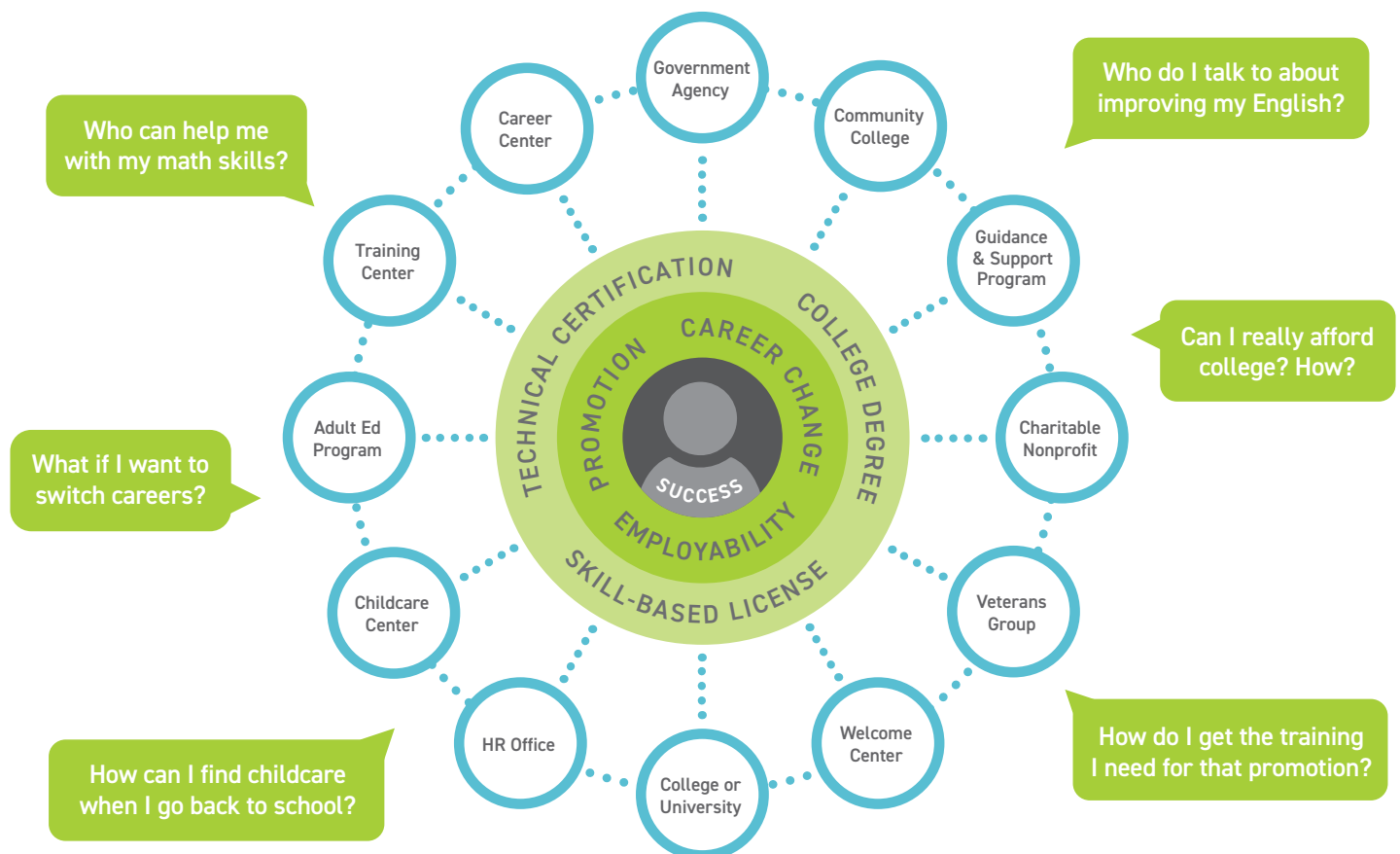
The **MaineSpark Navigator** network is a dedicated and trained group of education and career specialists who help **Mainers connect to their futures**. Through one-on-one conversations, they explain the value of education and the role of MaineSpark in helping Mainers obtain the credentials they need to qualify for good jobs and pursue their life goals. Navigators understand financial, logistic and other challenges, and are able to point Mainers to the right resources for their individual situations.

The Navigators in the network are here to work directly with the public, helping Mainers in every way they can. In return, MaineSpark keeps the Navigators up-to date on information and resources through trainings, resources and events.

Issues on which Navigators can advise

applications / enrollment / admissions / financial aid / scholarships / career planning
tutoring / apprenticeships / housing / healthcare / transportation / childcare

With Navigators, Mainers can start anywhere and be connected to answers!



Why is the Navigator network necessary?

MaineSpark's goal is for 60% of Mainers to hold credentials of value by 2025 so that they can fill the excellent jobs available in the state. This ambitious milestone—which requires an increase of over 63,000 skilled adults in the next six years—is vital to the economic success of our state. To reach it, many Mainers will need to overcome significant barriers in order to enroll in educational or training programs.

Similar efforts in other states have shown that people are most likely to meet their educational and/or skill training goals when they receive **individualized, one-on-one, continuous guidance**. The MaineSpark Navigator network provides this vital support.

Who are the Navigators currently in the network?

The MaineSpark Navigator network is made up of 375 professionals from across the sectors supporting adults in Maine, all of whom are experienced in offering professional advising and guidance. Each Navigator brings expertise to the table, and through this program, MaineSpark is establishing a community of practice that optimizes skill- and information-sharing.

Where are we in the process?

With the support of Lumina Foundation, Avangrid, and Maine Community Foundation, MaineSpark's Adult Promise track began developing the Navigator network in 2018. By pulling in knowledgeable professionals already serving in a diverse array of programs and fields to serve as Navigators, MaineSpark has helped streamline a sometimes complex process. Through the MaineSpark Navigator network, we are able to share data and work collaboratively with a wide range of institutions and service organizations, thereby providing Mainers with a more seamless guidance process.

Later this year, MaineSpark's Adult Promise track will launch an online hub which can be used by Navigators and the public to more quickly and easily access the most relevant resources for individuals on the path to career success.

What still needs to be done?

In order to achieve the 60% by 2025 goal, Mainers must be able to strategically negotiate community, education, and employment resources that support their college and career access. Navigators are central to this effort. MaineSpark hopes to increase the number of Navigators to 500, offering scholarships for Navigators to attend trainings.

Other similar successful initiatives are state-led. Through a shared public/private model, the number of Navigators could continue to grow, as will the amount of time and energy the Navigators are able to focus on each aspiring adult who connects with them.