

TUSM–MMC Maine Track

Undergraduate Medical Education Teaching Partnership



The Tufts University School of Medicine–
Maine Medical Center Maine Track Program
was founded with three primary goals in mind:
to address the shortage of doctors in Maine; to
offer Maine’s brightest students the financial
means to pursue a career in medicine; and to
develop an innovative curriculum focused on
community-based education.



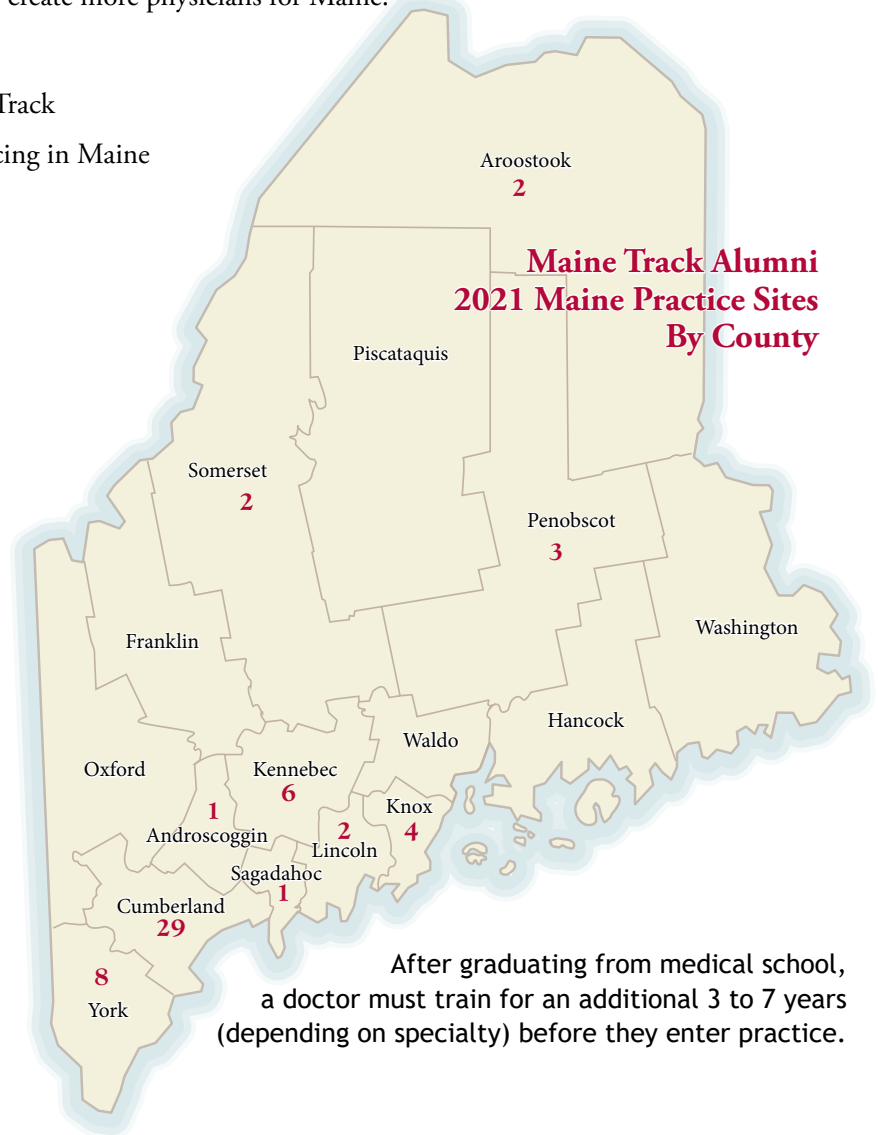
School of
Medicine

Addressing the shortage of doctors in Maine

In Maine, more than 60% of the population lives in rural areas that are federally-designated shortage areas — meaning there’s less than one physician for every 3,500 people. This shortage prevents rural Mainers in particular from getting necessary preventive care, and exacerbates existing healthcare disparities between Maine’s urban and rural communities.

The Maine Track was created to help supply Maine with a new generation of physicians interested in rural medicine. Here are some examples of how the Maine Track is helping to create more physicians for Maine:

- 316 physicians have graduated from the Maine Track
- 50% of the first Maine Track class is now practicing in Maine
- Almost 30% of Maine Track graduates have matched to Maine Med for their residency
- Half of all Maine Track graduates have chosen a specialty related to primary care, outpacing national trends
- The number of medical school applications from Maine residents has almost tripled since the program began in 2009



After graduating from medical school, a doctor must train for an additional 3 to 7 years (depending on specialty) before they enter practice.

“I am under the impression that practicing rural medicine offers opportunity to raise a family, impact a community, and have time to do activities outside of work. This is a similar interpretation I had prior to entering the Maine Track, but it has been nice to have that further validated through my rural medicine exposures in the first two years of medicine, and in my family medicine rotation in third year.”

– Richard Byrnes
Maine Track Class of 2022, Hometown of Portland



Offering Maine's brightest students the financial means to pursue a career in medicine

Scholarship funds are essential to the lasting success of the Maine Track because they are giving more Mainers the chance to attend medical school and they attract the highest quality students to the program; keeping our best and brightest close to home.

A \$25,000 scholarship is provided annually to each student filling one of the 20 slots per class that are reserved for students with Maine ties. These scholarships are making the pursuit of a medical career more affordable for Maine residents by reducing each scholar's debt load by \$100,000 during their four years of medical school.

The Maine Track awards more than \$2 million in scholarship funds to 80 students across 4 classes each year. In total, more than \$21 million in scholarship support has been provided to students since the program began in 2013. Many of these scholarships are endowed — 61 of 80 — but others must be renewed every single year.

Endowed scholarship funds totaling \$40 million will ensure adequate income for our annual financial commitment of \$2 million per year, setting up the Maine Track's long-term sustainability. To date, we are 90% of the way toward securing our goal of \$40 million in endowed scholarship funds for the Maine Track.



Scholarships remain essential to the success of the Maine Track, and would not be possible without the incredible support of our community.

The following new and renewed named scholarships were awarded to 20 students in the Class of 2025:

Bacow Endowed Scholarship Fund

Bingham Scholarship Fund

Sam L. Cohen Foundation Endowed Scholarship Fund

Curran Family Endowed Scholarship Fund

Dr. Rajiv Desai Maine Track Scholarship Fund

Doctors for Maine's Future Program (supporting 2 students)

James H. & Doris M. Galli Endowed Scholarship Fund

Richard & Rakia Hatch Endowed Scholarship Fund (supporting 2 students)

Hourihan-Ryan Endowed Scholarship Fund

MMC Medical Staff Endowed Scholarship Fund

MMP Surgical Care Endowed Scholarship Fund

Peter & Jackie Mundy Endowed Scholarship Fund

Selma Pluznick Endowed Scholarship Fund

Thomas & Elizabeth Renyi Scholarship Fund

The Olympia J. Snowe, John R. McKernan, Jr. and Caron Family Maine Track Scholarship Fund Honoring J. Daniel Miller, MD

Phil Thompson, MD Scholarship Fund

Tower Society Scholarship Fund

Women's Board Endowed Scholarship Fund

The Impact of Maine Track Scholarships:



“I am part of the first generation in my family to attend college and medical school in the United States... I am truly grateful for this scholarship as it opened up the freedom to pursue a residency in whatever specialty I decided on without the influence of finances. It ensured that my loans were manageable. It also empowered my classmates and me to know that the state of Maine has literally invested in us through this program. In a broader sense, this scholarship highlights the devotion that our fellow Mainers show to the well-being of our community.”

– Charm Karunasiri, MD
Maine Track Class of 2021, Hometown of Caribou



“Becoming a physician is extremely challenging — mentally, emotionally, and sometimes even physically! This scholarship helps to decrease the financial burden of becoming a physician. As I progress more and more into my education, my student loans are becoming less and less of some far off thing. I am extremely thankful that this scholarship has helped to decrease this burden. Being on the wards has shown me how desperately this state needs physicians. I am so thankful that your donation is helping to fill this need.”

– Connor Dahlberg
Maine Track Class of 2022, Hometown of Friendship



“Thank you for supporting Maine Track students! As I’ve spent more time learning around the state, I’ve seen the positive impact the program has on all of the sites, clinics, and individual staff and preceptors who are involved as well. It feels like we are strengthening the fabric of healthcare in Maine that connects all of these disparate sites, which is such a wonderful perk of being a Maine Track learner.”

– Susannah Daggett
Maine Track Class of 2022, Hometown of Yarmouth

Developing an innovative curriculum focused on community-based education

The Maine Track offers a uniquely different way of delivering medical education. Students in the Maine Track spend the majority of their time (3 of 4 years) in Maine at sites across the state, engaging in an immersive curriculum. Maine is truly their campus. The largest addition to the curriculum this year was the inaugural “Threads Interclerkship Week,” a two week immersive experience where third year students meet to reflect on important topics, or threads, that are not always emphasized in medical school, including population health, healthcare systems, personal and professional development and the patient experience. We know that the next generation of physicians entering the complicated world of medicine will be better equipped with skills to succeed in all of the “non-medical” aspects of being a practicing physician.

Inside Medicine: Reaching the next generation

In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, Maine Medical Center launched Inside Medicine, a virtual extracurricular program for high school students across the state intended to expose Maine students to medicine as a potential career path. Through the program, students are mentored by Maine Track medical students and invited to discuss medicine as a career, address how to get to and through medical school, and dig into specific healthcare issues facing Maine.

Inside Medicine aims to increase the diversity in Maine’s medical workforce, including variation in race, gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic background, and sexual orientation. Another important goal of Inside Medicine is to increase opportunities for and inspire Maine high school students, particularly those in under-resourced schools and in rural communities.

The program began as a six-week pilot in the summer of 2020 and involved 24 students from Portland and Deering High Schools, over 70 percent of whom were students of color. By all accounts, the program (held entirely over Zoom) was a success; students valued the involvement of Maine Track medical students and wanted to spend as much time with them as possible.

The pilot led to a full-fledged Inside Medicine program during the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 school years, currently involving 57 students from 18 high schools across Maine. With more capacity, Inside Medicine could grow to reach significantly more students across our state. This program exemplifies the Maine Track’s commitment to community-based education.



Spotlight on Haya Raef

Maine Track student, Haya Raef, was one of the first mentors for Inside Medicine. Haya is a first generation Mainer of Syrian descent who grew up in Saudi Arabia. She recently reflected on how Inside Medicine impacted the high school students she worked with:

“It is so much fun teaching and interacting with high school students in the Inside Medicine program. During a time where many high school students are being pulled out of their extracurricular activities due to COVID-19, I am very grateful to be a part of a program that provides students with a unique opportunity to remain involved and active. I particularly enjoy working closely with the students and being able to mentor and guide them towards a career they are excited about. They are very appreciative of the program and always come prepared for each session enthusiastic to learn, which is extremely energizing.”

– Haya Raef

Maine Track Class of 2022, Hometown of Portland



In Memoriam

**Harris A. Berman, MD, FACP,
Dean Emeritus at Tufts University School of Medicine
and Pioneer of Maine Track**

Harris A. Berman, MD, FACP, Dean Emeritus at Tufts University School of Medicine and Maine Track program pioneer, passed away on Saturday, October 30, 2021, surrounded by his beloved family. After various careers — which included Peace Corps physician, infectious disease consultant, primary care physician, and founder and CEO of not-for-profit Tufts Health Plan — Dr. Berman served as dean of the Tufts University School of Medicine from 2011 to 2019. During his tenure as dean, Dr. Berman was instrumental in developing the Maine Track Program in collaboration with Maine Medical Center, calling it one of his proudest projects at the school.

In his obituary, Dr. Berman's family shared that "during his final days, even as his body failed him, he never flagged in his determination to help others thrive. In his hospital room at Tufts Medical Center, a young doctor-in-training approached his bed to conduct an exam and sheepishly promised to make it quick. Harris replied, 'I'm a medical educator. Take all the time you need.'" Dr. Berman's commitment to medical education and improving health care for everyone will live on through the Maine Track, as new physicians focused on practicing rural medicine in underserved areas graduate from the program each year.



Maine Track Class of 2021

In May of 2021, the 36 members of the Maine Track Class of 2021 completed medical school and earned their Doctor of Medicine degrees. With this class included, there are now 316 physicians who have graduated from the Maine Track program.

The final two years of medical school for the Maine Track Class of 2021 were shaped by a pandemic that not only disrupted the practice of medicine, but also revealed larger disparities in healthcare. Because these graduates lived through a time of racial reckoning and saw

firsthand how socioeconomic factors impact public health, they are particularly primed to address the underlying inequalities that hinder healthcare.

This call to action was prominent throughout the Maine Track Class of 2021 Celebration. Keynote speaker Nirav Shah, M.D., J.D., Director of Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention, challenged graduates to engage in healthcare beyond the bedside. Dr. Shah urged the class to ask themselves what more they can do to advocate for their patients and for a better healthcare system.

Asha Mohamud, voted class speaker by her peers, encouraged fellow graduates to advocate for healthcare needs of those who are marginalized. Her personal journey to becoming a Maine Track graduate is a remarkable example of overcoming obstacles in order to follow a calling and serve an underrepresented population.

Class of 2021 Stats:

- 13 graduates stayed on at Maine Medical Center for their residency
- Of these 13, 5 matched to primary care specialties
- 1 graduate matched to the Maine-Dartmouth Family Medicine Program in Augusta, ME

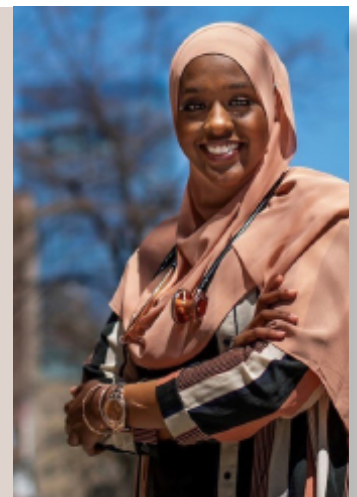
Spotlight on Asha Mohamud

“Mine is the story of a kid who was never supposed to become a physician. My family’s journey in Maine started out in downtown Lewiston, sleeping on bare mattresses, trying to figure out how to survive in this new country we now call home.

I have vivid memories of my mother working odd jobs to sustain her three young children. 3 kids, 3 pieces of luggage. In a poor mill town in Maine. My father would not join us for another 5 years. I have vivid memories of a younger version of myself struggling to grasp the English language.

Along the way, there were countless voices telling me that my dreams were meant for others, expending years’ worth of energy to tell me I would never make it into the Maine Track program.

I am happy to say my story is one of triumph, the underdog, the second Somali woman physician in the history of Maine. Throughout medical school, I realized I wasn’t alone in my experience. I saw so much of it echoed in my patients’ stories. Because of who I am — my race, my faith, and my gender — my presence in medicine depends on the kindness and accommodation of others.”



– Asha Mohamud, MD
Maine Track Class of 2021, Hometown of Lewiston

Maine Track Class of 2025

The Maine Track Class of 2025 — comprised of 42 students eager for exposure to rural medicine — embarked on their four-year medical school journey in July of 2021. Their entrance was commemorated at Maine Medical Center with the 13th Victor A. McKusick, MD Lecture, which took place on Tuesday, July 20th. In Boston, students took part in the Tufts University School of Medicine’s White Coat Ceremony, where they joined their Maine and Boston-based classmates in taking the Hippocratic Oath.

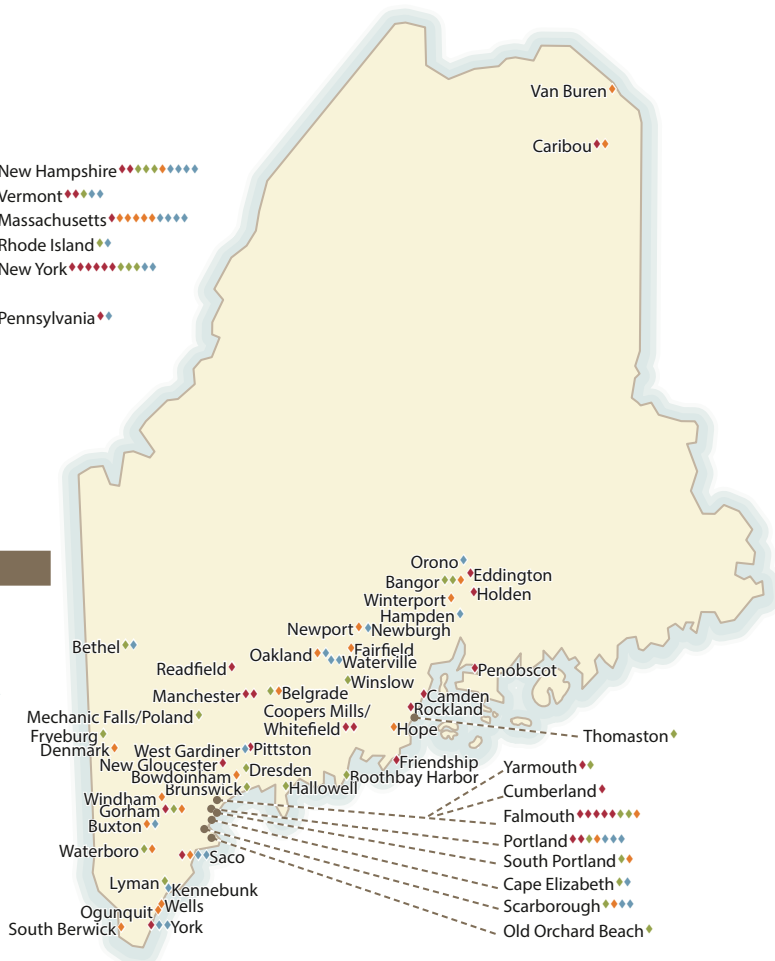


More than three fourths of students in the Maine Track Class of 2025 have connections to Maine, either through childhood residence, family ties, or attendance at a Maine undergraduate university or college. This newest cohort of Maine Track students will remain in Boston for their first year classes and will relocate to Maine in the summer of 2022!

◆ Class of 2022 ◆ Class of 2023 ◆ Class of 2024 ◆ Class of 2025



USA/INTERNATIONAL	MAINE		
California ◆◆◆◆	Bangor ◆◆	Gorham ◆◆	Portland ◆◆◆◆
Colorado ◆◆	Bethel ◆◆	Hallowell ◆	Readfield ◆
Georgia ◆	Belgrade ◆◆	Hampden ◆	Rockland ◆
Iowa ◆	Boothbay Harbor ◆	Holden ◆	Saco ◆◆◆
Kansas ◆	Bowdoinham ◆	Hope ◆	Scarborough ◆◆◆
Massachusetts ◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆	Brunswick ◆	Kennebunk ◆	South Berwick ◆◆
Michigan ◆◆	Buxton ◆◆	Lyman ◆	South Portland ◆◆
Montana ◆	Camden ◆	Manchester ◆◆	Thomaston ◆
New Hampshire ◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆	Cape Elizabeth ◆◆	Mechanic Falls ◆	Van Buren ◆
New Jersey ◆◆	Caribou ◆◆	New Gloucester ◆	Waterboro ◆
New York ◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆	Coopers Mills ◆	Newburgh ◆	Waterville ◆◆
Pennsylvania ◆	Cumberland ◆	Newport ◆	Wells ◆
Rhode Island ◆	Denmark ◆	Oakland ◆	West Gardiner ◆
South Carolina ◆	Dresden ◆	Ogunquit ◆	Whitefield ◆
Texas ◆	Eddington ◆	Old Orchard Beach ◆	Winterport ◆
Utah ◆	Fairfield ◆	Orono ◆	Windham ◆
Vermont ◆◆◆◆	Falmouth ◆◆◆◆◆◆	Penobscot ◆	Winslow ◆
Washington, DC ◆◆	Friendship ◆	Pittston ◆	Yarmouth ◆
Wisconsin ◆	Fryeburg ◆	Poland ◆	York ◆◆◆
Laxmipura, Gujarat (India) ◆			



TUSM MMC MAINE TRACK PROGRAM

For more information or to support a student in the Maine Track Program, please visit our website at www.mmc.org/mainetrack or contact the Maine Medical Center Philanthropy Department at (207) 662-2669.