

## 2020 Mitchell Institute Longitudinal Study Findings

1. Around two-thirds (64%) of Alumni respondents currently live in Maine. **Those who do not live in Maine may move back to the state if the correct career opportunities present themselves, as this is perceived as a primary barrier to moving back.**

Around half (52%) of those who do not currently live in Maine are convincible in terms of moving back to the state:

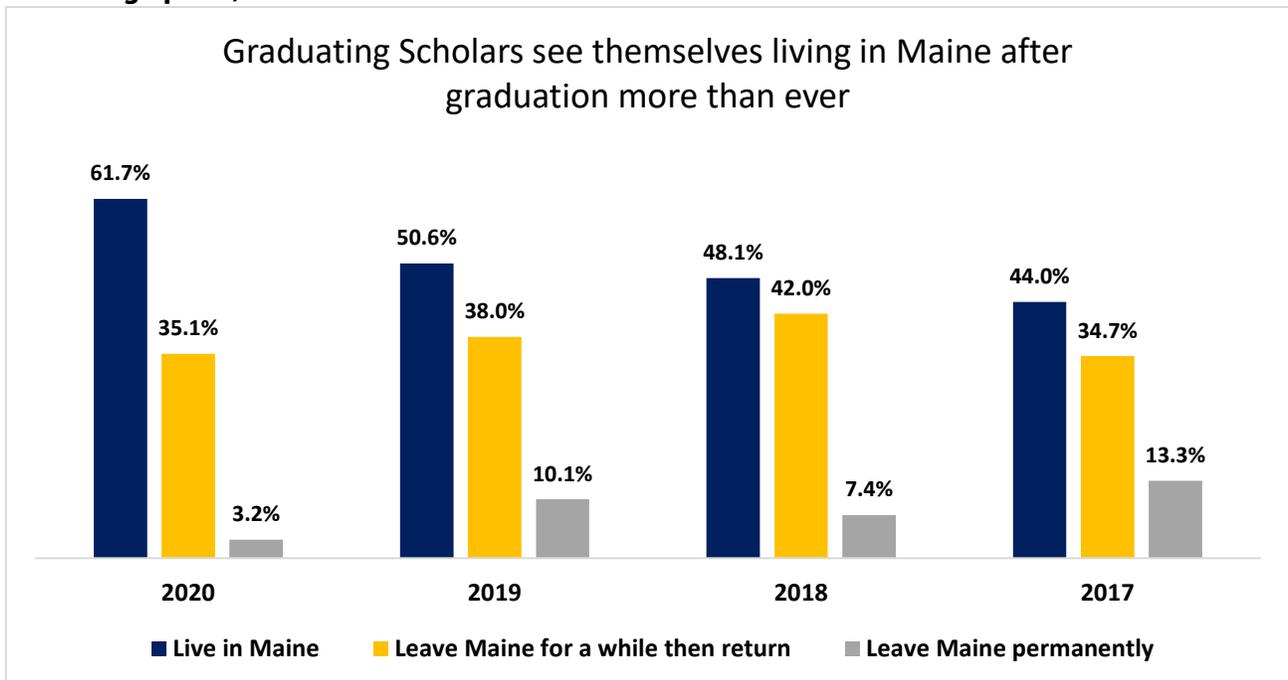
### “Do you see yourself living in Maine five years from now?”

	All Alumni Respondents (n=476)	Those who do not currently live in Maine (n=172)
<b>Yes</b>	57.1%	15.1%
<b>No</b>	19.3%	47.7%
<b>Don't know</b>	23.5%	37.2%

Of those respondents who responded “no” or “don’t know” to whether they saw themselves living in Maine five years from now, the words “career,” “job,” “work,” and “opportunities” came up frequently. These perceptions of the economy are important, not just for individuals themselves; for the nearly 40% of Alumni who are married, there is also a concern of finding a good-paying job in a spouse’s career field as well. These data support our ongoing work with initiatives that are raising awareness regarding opportunities in the state.

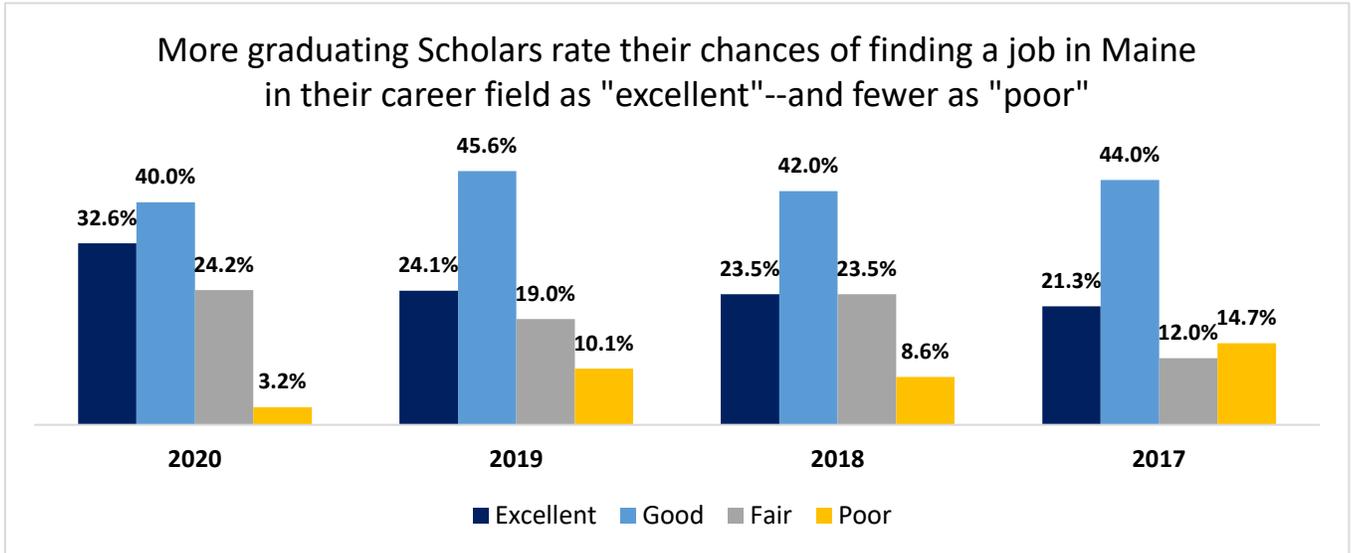
2. **In the future, graduating Scholars see themselves in Maine more than ever.**

**Excitingly, over 60% of graduating Scholars say they plan to live in Maine after graduation—a new high point, and a continuation of a trend seen since 2017.**



This trend, and particularly the all-time low of just 3.2% of graduating Scholars (representing just 3 respondents) saying they plan to leave the state permanently, is exciting news.

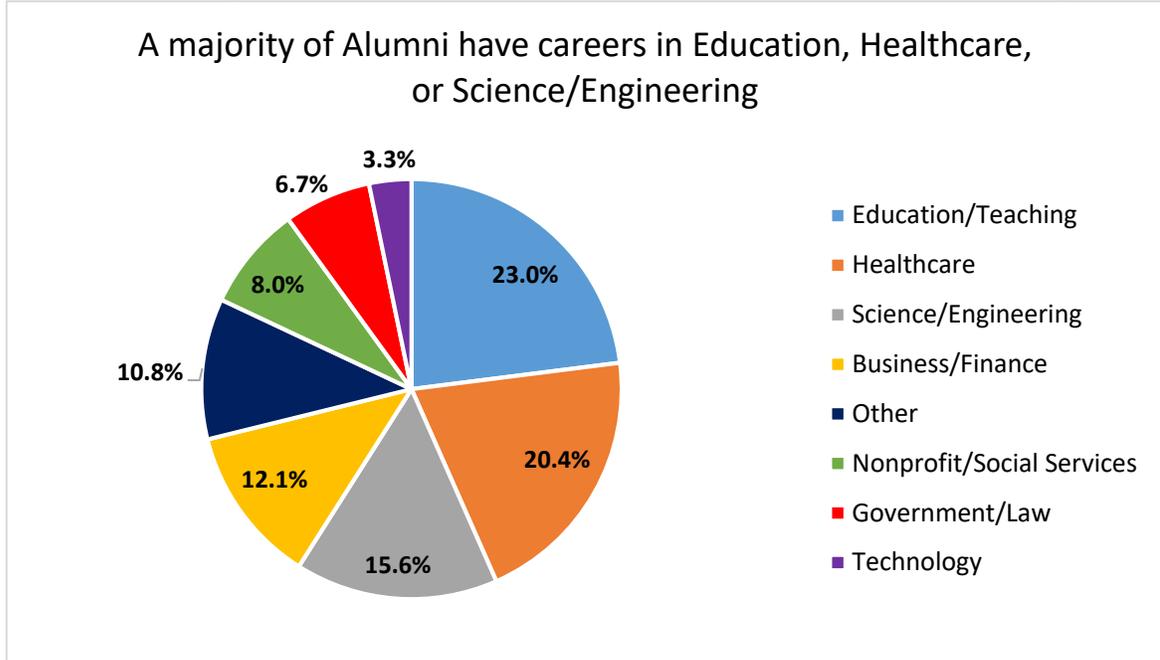
Reassuring news further comes from an accompanying trend towards more positive outlooks on Maine’s economy overall—specifically, the chance that Scholars think they will have of finding a job in their desired career field:



These trends must be viewed with cautious optimism; it is worth noting that nearly a quarter of respondents (24.2%, or 23 respondents) view their job prospects in Maine as “fair.” Of those, 61% (14) plan to leave Maine for a while and then return, 26% (6) plan to live in Maine, and 13% (3—the only respondents who answered as such) said they would leave the state permanently.

3. Alumni have a diverse range of career paths.

These trends have changed over time: in 2017, 27% of Alumni worked in Education/Teaching,



compared to 35% in 2005. This reflects trends in the Maine economy towards healthcare as a primary occupation as the population of the state ages.

Of those Alumni who selected “other” as a career field, the responses were truly wide-ranging: from construction to art direction to retail.

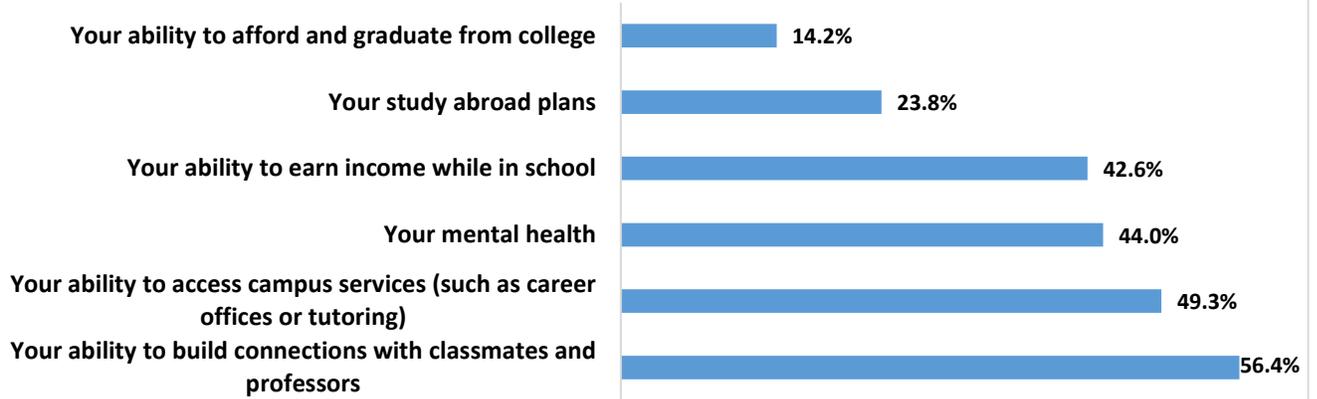
Strikingly, the percentage of Alumni who have jobs related to a long-term career interest, as well as the percentage of Alumni who have jobs related to a college field of study, have both steadily increased over time:

	2020	2019	2018
<b>% of Alumni with a job related to a long-term career interest:</b>	88.1%	87.6%	85.3%
<b>% of Alumni with a job related to a college field of study:</b>	78.1%	77.4%	73.2%

4. **COVID-19 has and continues to disrupt many aspects of life, and this is just as true for Mitchell Scholars.** In answer to a series of new questions, a majority of Mitchell Scholars (70%) say that their plans for a job or internship this past summer were disrupted by the pandemic, and others reported major impacts to college life:

**COVID-19 has impacted Scholars' abilities to form connections and use campus services most**

% of Scholars who felt COVID-19 had had a "major impact" on:

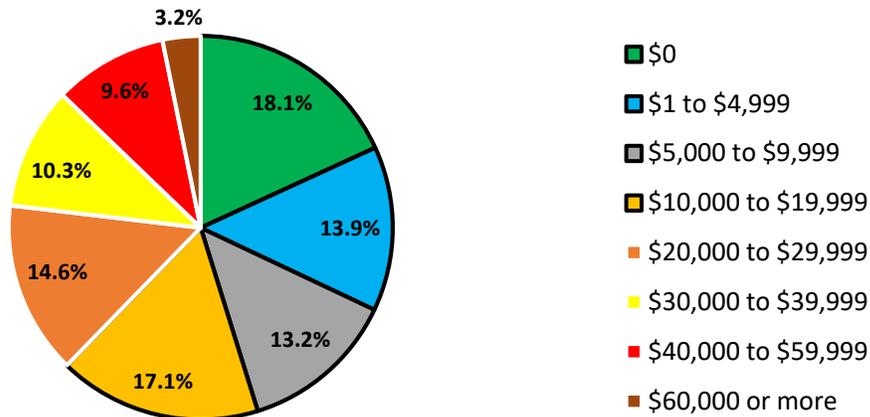


The fact that only 14% of Scholars felt that COVID has had a major impact on their ability to afford and graduate from college is reassuring; however, the timing of the survey (May/June 2020) means that as job losses from the pandemic's economic fallout continue to accrue and as Scholars return to school, attitudes may change.

**5. Despite the pandemic, Scholars' economic outlooks are positive.**

**A majority (62.3%) of current Scholars expect to borrow less than \$20,000 for their undergraduate degrees**, with only a small minority (3.2%, or 9 Scholar respondents) reporting that they expect to borrow \$60,000 or more. Of that small minority, the vast majority (60%) are going to private schools outside of Maine.

**Most Mitchell Scholars expect to borrow less than \$20,000 for undergrad**



2020's survey results continue a promising trend in the data first seen in 2019, in that more Continuing Scholars report feeling no concern over their ability to repay their student loans. Though these responses do not reflect the same Scholars responding to the same question year over year, they do reflect a larger shift in opinion with consecutive classes of Scholars.

