



First-Year Student Success Initiative: Summer Preparation Working Group

March 15, 2019

Run Time : 00:01:07

<https://youtu.be/iDmM-dF6NtA>

Chris Bartram, coordinator of Maine Bound discusses the goals of the summer preparation working group that is part of the First-Year Student Success Initiative at UMaine.

[background music]

Chris Bartram: We're specifically looking at data-supported insights into retention as it relates to summer programs. We're looking at our outdoor orientation program as well as a variety of other summer opportunities for students.

Research is showing right now that outdoor orientation, as well as other prep programs, are helping student retention due to the small group interactions and the social support around it. The real thing that we're trying to bridge right now is we're looking at the academic side of things and how we can prepare them academically to succeed in their classes.

I'm so passionate about student development and how we can help our students succeed on campus. That was the primary reason I got involved. It keeps me inspired every day. If you look at retention of students who are academically more challenged, our outdoor orientation program alone increases student retention by 18 percent.

We already know that the things that we're doing are successful. It's just a matter of expanding them in a sustainable way.

The University of Maine in Orono is the flagship campus of the University of Maine System, where efforts toward racial equity are ongoing, as is the commitment to facing a complicated and not always just institutional history. The University recognizes that it is located on Marsh Island in the homeland of the Penobscot nation, where issues of water and its territorial rights, and encroachment upon sacred sites, are ongoing. Penobscot homeland is connected to the other Wabanaki Tribal Nations — the Passamaquoddy, Maliseet, and Micmac — through kinship, alliances, and diplomacy. The university also recognizes that the Penobscot Nation and the other Wabanaki Tribal Nations are distinct, sovereign, legal and political entities with their own powers of self-governance and self-determination.