



UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTHERN MAINE
College of Education and
Human Development

Adult Education Program Alumni Career Stories

Jay Paterson

In 1994, when Jay Paterson started taking classes in the adult education master's program the Internet and online learning were just on the horizon. So Jay moved from Vermont with his wife to attend the USM program while working full time in Maine.

Jay had been working in distance learning or interactive television when the field was dominated by people who had strong technology skills. Jay noticed that "There were not a lot of educators." Jay wanted a master's level program with a solid focus on adult education, one that would help him understand what it takes to develop and instruct a good class for meaningful learning. "I felt that if I was going to stay in the field, I needed to study adult education for credibility and for my own foundation." Fortunately for us, Jay found what he was looking for at USM!

The program was challenging for Jay at first because "It was difficult to return to studying as I had graduated from my undergraduate program in political science 8 years earlier." Reading Dewey made a lasting impression, perhaps due to Dewey's connection to Vermont. During the program, Jay came to appreciate the close relationship between adult education and the great philosophers. He summed up the connection this way; "Adult education is living, and living is adult education." He realized that people have been thinking about the great questions about learning and education for millennia. As Jay sees it, "We want to quantify, and give people tools, but adult education isn't only about how you organize flip charts. We should appreciate the 'art' involved in adult education."



After completing his master's program, Jay returned to Vermont to work in the Chancellor's office of the Vermont State Colleges, serving as the Assistant Director for a regional center. Since 1999, Jay has been a Director at Vermont Technical College where he manages the division that handles corporate education and training and works with business contracts state-wide. Jay's work impacts workforce development for the state of Vermont and for the past few years he has been instrumental in bringing a program called the Workforce Development Academy to people who are charged with developing Vermont's workforce into the next century. Jay is well aware of how important lifelong learning is to earning in the state of Vermont. With a staff of 12 and additional part-time contractors, Jay's unit offers key work related educational programming to help adults stay competitive and employed in today's global economy.

Today, Jay wouldn't have had to move to Maine to participate in the program and receive a break in tuition. Jay is pleased to know that the online adult education master's degree program is available to everyone at in-state tuition rates!

For more information about the USM Adult Education program please contact Graduate Admission at (207) 780-4386 or visit www.usm.maine.edu/cehd/adult-education/