

BUILDINGENERGY BOSTON

Building the Energy Workforce: Hands-On Pathways from Campus to Community

Tyler Hebert, Downeast Energy Solutions

Helen Lloyd, College of the Atlantic

Samara McLaughlin, Sipayik Resilience Committee

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Curated by Christopher Nielson and Sara Cooper

Northeast Sustainable Energy Association (NESEA) | March 23, 2026

BUILDING THE ENERGY WORKFORCE:

HANDS-ON PATHWAYS ON CAMPUS AND
IN THE COMMUNITY

Samara McLaughlin, Rashmi Mohan,
Tyler Hebert, Helen Lloyd



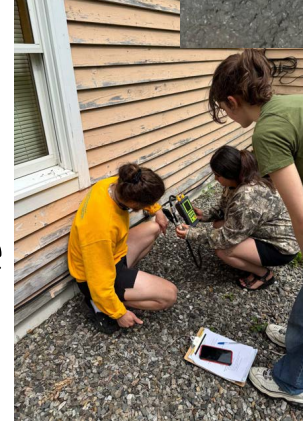
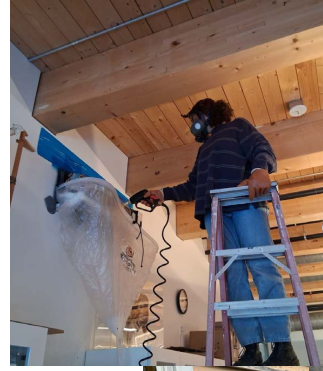
Sipayik
Resilience
Committee



1. Workforce demographics + how we compare
2. Recruiting and training to support diversity
3. Why diversity matters
4. Sipayik Resilience Committee
5. Visions for the future

THE COA ENERGY PROGRAM

- Trying to get off fossil fuels
- Classes, work-study, internships
- Campus + community projects
- Retrofits, electrification, heat pump cleaning, energy audits, energy usage tracking, K-12 education, ...

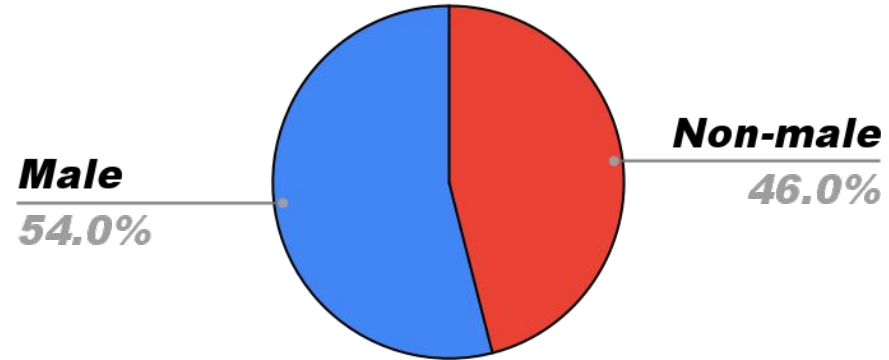


WORKFORCE DEMOGRAPHICS

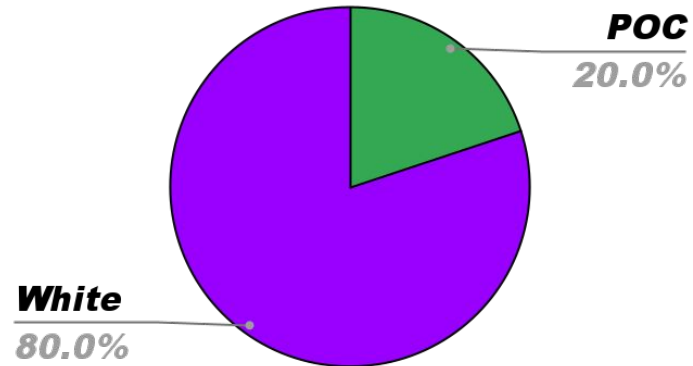
Who is working in the sustainable energy and building industry?

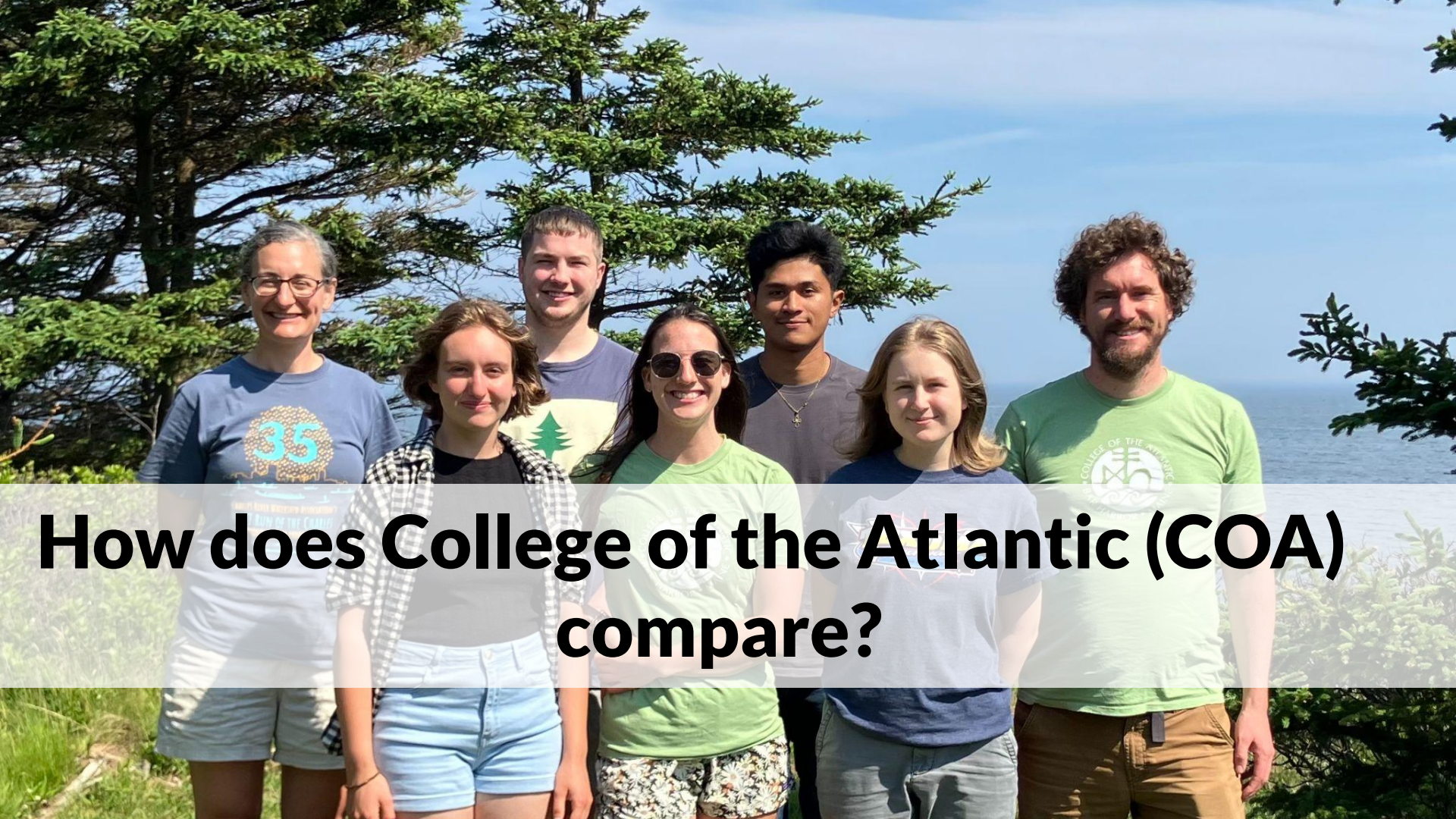
NESEA Boston Conference 2025

GENDER

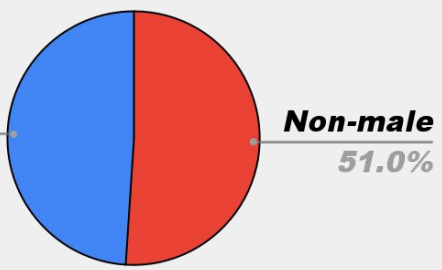
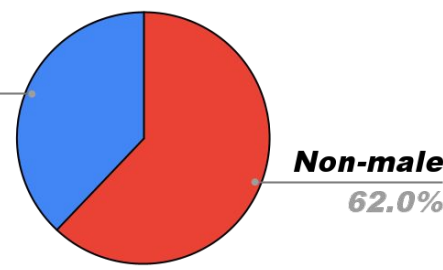
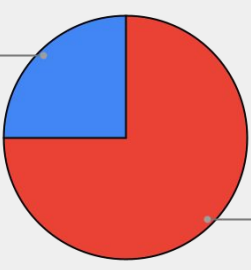
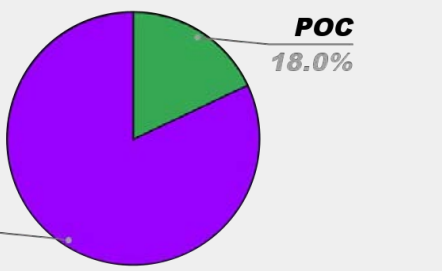
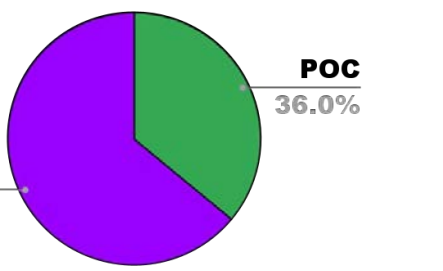
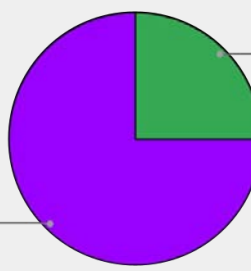


RACE





How does College of the Atlantic (COA) compare?

Academically engaged students (n = 65)	Employed students (n = 39)	Full-time staff (n = 4)
 <p>Male 49.0%</p> <p>Non-male 51.0%</p>	 <p>Male 38.0%</p> <p>Non-male 62.0%</p>	 <p>Male 25.0%</p> <p>Non-male 75.0%</p>
 <p>White 82.0%</p> <p>POC 18.0%</p>	 <p>White 64.0%</p> <p>POC 36.0%</p>	 <p>White 75.0%</p> <p>POC 25.0%</p>

NESEA Boston 2025: 46% non-male, 20% POC

HOW DO WE RECRUIT AND TRAIN?

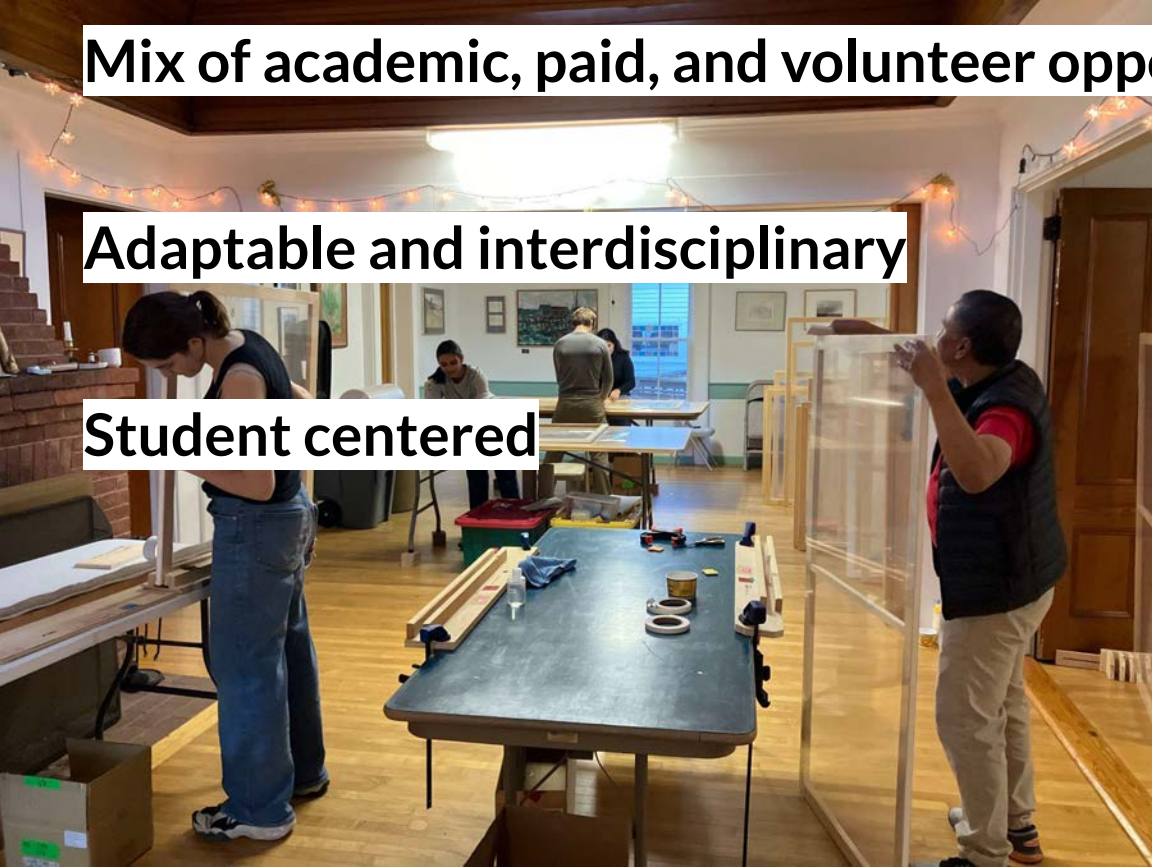
MAKING THINGS ACCESSIBLE, RELEVANT, AND FUN

ACCESSIBLE

Mix of academic, paid, and volunteer opportunities

Adaptable and interdisciplinary

Student centered



RELEVANT

Real projects with real benefits

Certifications

Campus and community engagement

Ties to non-profits and employers



FUN

Healthy working environment

Team bonding

Independence and support



EVERGREEN WORKFORCE



RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING AT EVERGREEN

Diverse employment models

Hands-on training for everyone regardless of experience

Ongoing mentorship by supervisors, managerial, and leadership staff

Professional development opportunities



BENEFITS OF A DIVERSE WORKFORCE

Why prioritize diversity?

1. WORKING WITH DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

Knowledge + Trust



Example: working with women on energy audits and retrofits



2. INCREASED RESILIENCE, FUNDING, AND PROFITABILITY

Increases available workforce

Opens up funding opportunities

Example: COA summer interns

Strong Diversity & Inclusion → increased profitability



3. MAKING GOOD CAREERS ACCESSIBLE

Including people who have been excluded from well paying and secure jobs

Expanding our focus to underserved communities

Example: Rashmi + Tyler



SIPAYIK RESILIENCE COMMITTEE

Energy sovereignty and climate resilience through citizen action.

Sipayik Resilience Committee



SRC: Who We Are and Our Mission

The mission of the Sipayik Resilience Committee is to advance energy sovereignty and climate resilience for members of the Passamaquoddy Tribe at Pleasant Point through citizen action, enabling Tribal Members to live in more sustainable ways that align with Peskotomuhkati traditional values.



Weatherization

Pleasant Point									
YEAR	INSERTS BUILT	CUMULATIVE NUMBER OF INSERTS	MMBTU OF ENERGY SAVED THIS YEAR	GALLONS OF HEATING OIL SAVED THIS YEAR	TONS OF CARBON DIOXIDE EQ SAVED THIS YEAR	CUMULATIVE MMBTU OF ENERGY SAVED	CUMULATIVE GALLONS OF HEATING OIL SAVED	CUMULATIVE TONS OF CARBON DIOXIDE EQ SAVED	ANNUAL \$ SAVINGS
2023	373	373	453	3,268	37	453	3,268	37	\$10,913
2024	243	616	748	5,396	60	1,202	8,664	97	\$18,023
2025	182	798	970	6,991	78	2,171	15,654	175	\$23,348



Energy Audits




Community Engagement



- Sipayik Elementary School Career Fair
- Sipayik Energy & Resilience Power Up Symposium
- Passamaquoddy Days Health Fair
- SRC community meetings
- SRC Greenhouse Project

Session Learning Objectives

- 
- Advocate for the benefits of a diverse workforce.
 - Identify new paths for diversifying the workforce, including new workforce development strategies for the building and energy sector to create a more resilient and effective industry.
 - Demonstrate the need for collaboration and community partnerships to overcome the barriers created by federal inaction and funding cuts.
 - Embrace the next generation of leaders, and learn from their vision of the future.

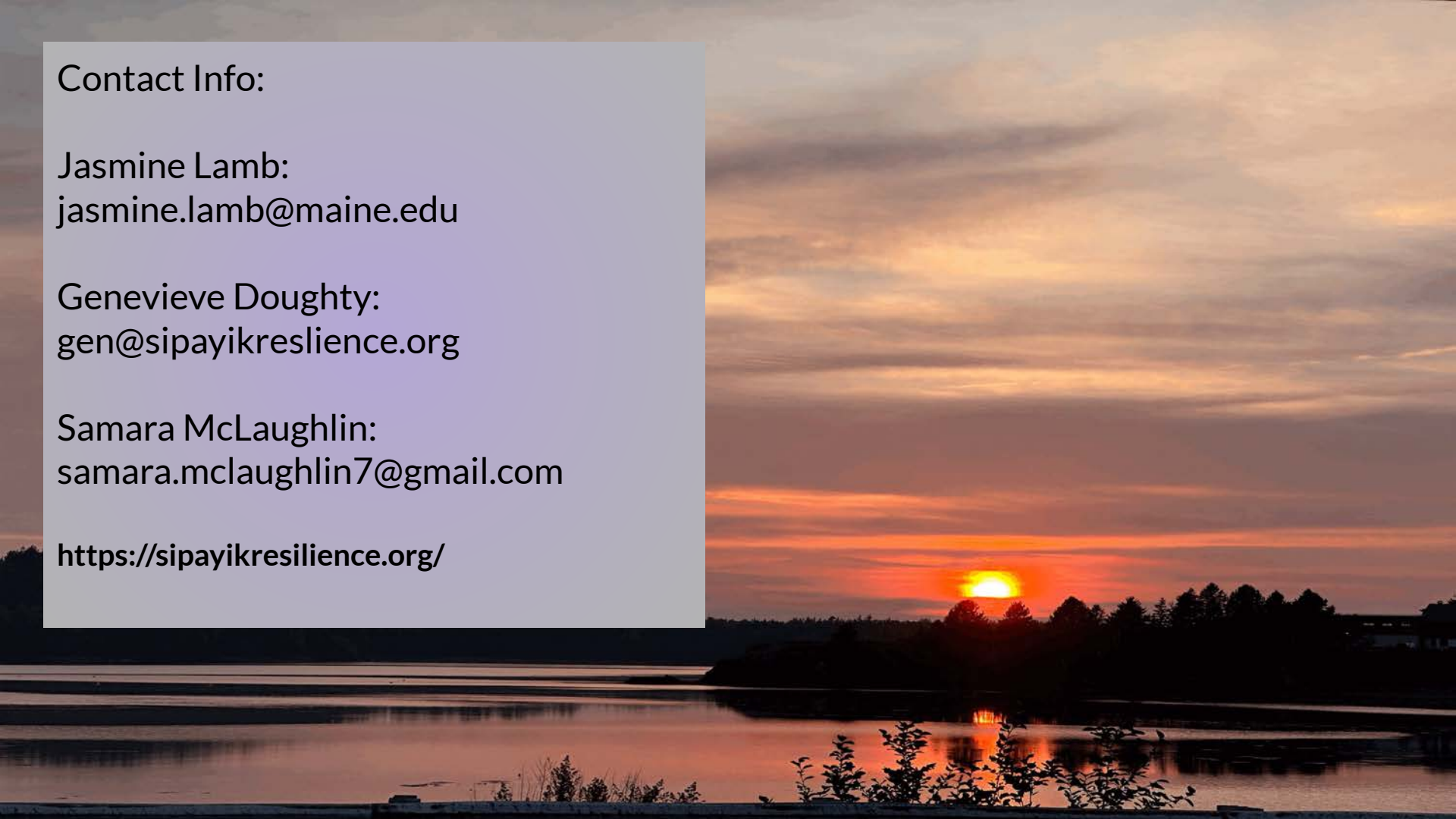
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VISIONS FOR THE FUTURE

What are we working towards?

SAMARA

*Balancing Community &
Environmental Needs*

RASHMI

More women in the trades

HELEN

*Appropriate, safe, and efficient
housing for everyone*

TYLER

*Including and empowering future
generations, starting at the K-12 level*

REFLECTION + Q&A

Introduce yourself to the person next to you and reflect on the following questions (5 - 10 mins):

- **What are the barriers to entry that you see to your field of work, and what solutions can you envision? (think in terms of gender, race, class, family background, ...)**
- **What could you/your company do to improve education and workforce development in the clean energy and building sectors?**

Q&A + share insights from reflection

BUILDINGENERGY BOSTON

Please fill out an evaluation for this session



or: nesea.org/eval

Northeast Sustainable Energy Association (NESEA)