

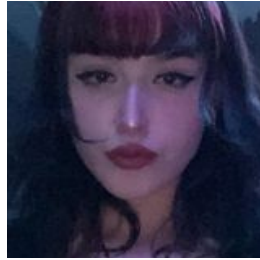
PASSAGES PRESS

A WAYFINDER SCHOOLS STUDENT PUBLICATION

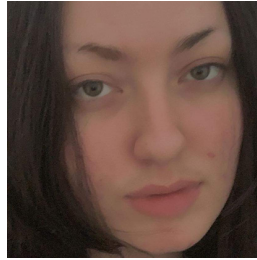
CLASS OF 2023



**Destiny
Adkins**
Swanville



**Emily
Alley**
Calais



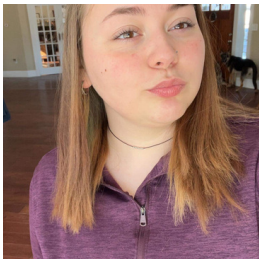
**Merjema
Brkic**
Camden



**Elizabeth
Clark**
Rockland



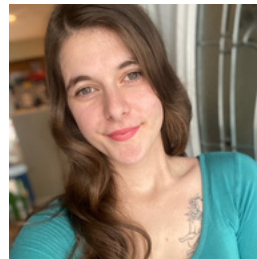
**Grace
DePalmer**
Bath



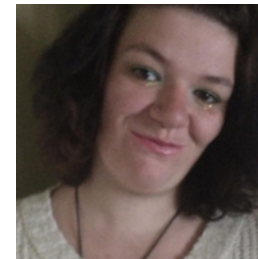
**Emalee
Donahue**
Lewiston



**Ethan
Fogg**
South Thomaston



**Katelynn
Juco**
Lewiston



**Miranda-Jean
Leavitt**
New Gloucester



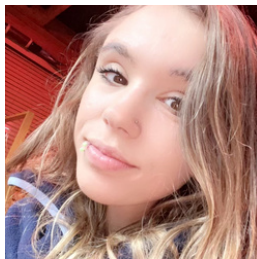
**Khai
Lehouillier**
Edgecomb



**Danielle
Maheu**
Bath



**Autumn
McIntyre**
Pembroke



**Rianna
Morales**
Warren

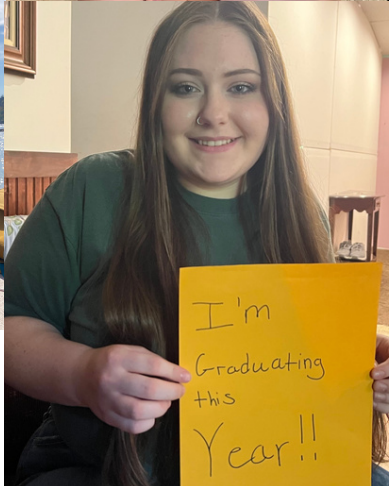
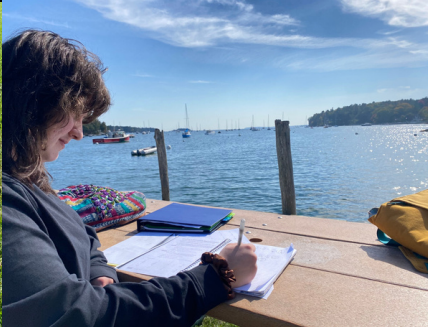


**Kenzie
Phifer**
Union



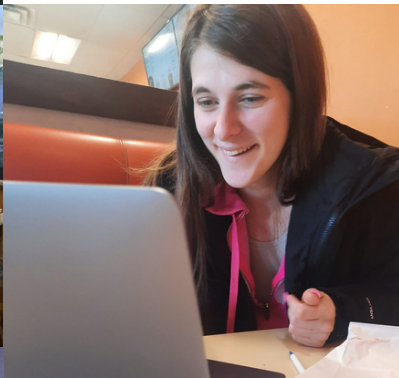
**Raelynn
Philbrook**
Cushing

This year, Wayfinder graduated 16 students. One has chosen to remain anonymous.




Wayfinder
SCHOOLS™

Class of 2023



Destiny Adkins

Swanville



Wayfinder Schools has helped me prepare for life, and has given me a clear path on what I want to do in life. I'm grateful that the teachers here have been so understanding and haven't given up on me graduating. It has opened a lot of new opportunities in my life.

Emily Alley

Calais



Over the last two years I've grown so much. Through battling a mystery illness taking over my life, I found Wayfinder. It literally changed my life.

I'm getting my permit. I got CPR/First Aid certified. I'm going to be able to have a diploma. I got an education without dropping out or going back to conditions that I couldn't go back to.

I'll be forever grateful. I've learned so much. I've met amazing experts and people. Even through flare ups, I always tried to find a way to finish my projects or lessons. I'm always going to look back at Wayfinder and appreciate everything they did for me.

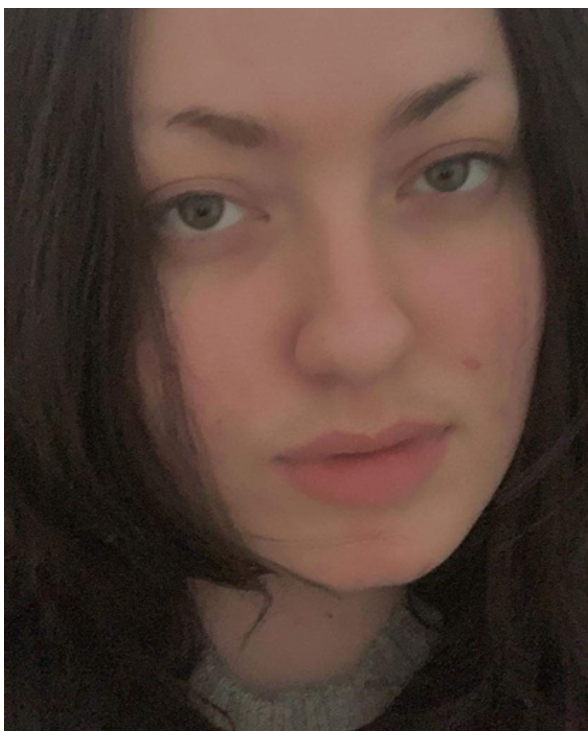
“Math is the only place where truth and beauty mean the same thing.” -Danica McKellar

Math was my biggest issue. I've improved a lot in my own opinion. I can understand it a little better, even though math is crazy to me! I'm always able to express myself through my art and connect it to a lot of my schooling. It has helped me understand things better. I will always remember the help Wayfinder Schools gave me.

Thank you!

Merjema Brkic

Camden



My name is Merjema Brkic and I am a student at Wayfinder Schools. I am just someone who did not have a chance to showcase my knowledge and talents. Wayfinder Schools was a part of my life that helped me grow into the person I am today, along with my very supportive family, close friends, and teachers. These are all people who believed in me and helped me express and work on my personal growth.

Many of you may not know me, even though my story was all over local news. I am a survivor of domestic abuse and trauma caused by my father. My father was the biggest obstacle in my life and it has been hard to recover from him and start from scratch.

Graduating high school is my dream, but it was also one of the hardest things to complete. Not because I am incapable of doing so, but because of being hurt by people I once trusted in. A teacher's role in our lives is to be there for us, to teach us, to watch us grow and build our futures. They are there to guide us. Wayfinder Schools did a wonderful job in fulfilling that role and has helped me succeed in my journey to graduate.

In my free time, I am usually a very creative individual. I like to express myself through various different art forms, such as photography and makeup. I taught myself makeup application and have gained knowledge about different brands, textures, application styles, tricks and hacks. I've also incorporated makeup into my final Passage project. It is one of my biggest passions and I am very happy with how far I have come along with it on my own. Aside from makeup, I enjoy cooking and I am a very good cook. I've had this passed on to me by my mother, who is also an amazing cook and has taught me everything I know about it.

Elizabeth Clark

Rockland



As my journey in Wayfinder comes to an end, I just wanted to say a couple things about the teachers and how the school has changed my life completely. I got pregnant with my first child when I was seventeen and immediately never imagined myself passing high school. I dropped out and lost complete faith in myself thinking I had forever lost that chance I had to finish school. At one of my OB appointments one of the nurses actually put the idea of Wayfinder in my head, me thinking it was a hoax I ignored it for a little while. Finally after days of putting thought into it I decided it was best for me to at least try to apply and see what came out of it. Almost immediately Erica reached out to me and wanted to meet and start the process of seeing if I was able to work with them to help myself get where I needed to be.

Just after getting in and setting up an appointment with Cathy, I ended up giving birth to my daughter Penelope the day I was supposed to have my interview. Cathy met me in the hospital and immediately then became the family in our life we lacked. It has been a long and hard past few years between moving from across the country, on and off island, Covid, a second child, and life in general. Now after many years with the never ending help and support from all the teachers, they have helped me reach the goal I never thought I would. I can never thank all of them enough, but I can start with saying, thank you.

“What you get by achieving your goals is not as important as what you become by achieving your goals.”

-Zig Ziglar

Grace DePalmer

Bath



I would not be where I am today without the help of my teacher and the Wayfinder Schools in general. I thought about not continuing school but with the help of my amazing teacher, I made it to where I am today.

"This is my invariable advice to people: Learn how to cook—try new recipes, learn from your mistakes, be fearless and above all have fun." -Julia Child

Emalee Donahue

Lewiston



My time at Wayfinder is sadly coming to an end. It is kind of bittersweet because I will miss this, but I am ready to move on and experience life. I had a lot of good times with workshops. My favorite workshop would be apple picking or cooking. I love being outside, but I also love cooking. If I had to recommend how to meet with your teacher it would definitely be cupcakes while you do school work. My favorite times with my teacher would be us laughing and eating cupcakes as we worked. I will forever be grateful for my teacher. If it wasn't for her I don't think I would have pushed myself to graduate as hard as I did. This school has shown me that just because

you have a hard time with school doesn't mean you should drop out and give up. I will forever be grateful for the opportunity I have been given by Wayfinder. They have really shown that they aren't like other schools. They are actually there for you every step of the way, and for that I am eternally grateful! I will definitely recommend this school to everyone!

Ethan Fogg

South Thomaston



I heard about Wayfinder Schools through my cousin who was already enrolled. I have a poor immune system and I get sick quite easily. I missed a lot of school and I had trouble focusing and doing work while in public school. I heard that at Wayfinder you get to work one-on-one with a teacher and if you have questions about the courses you can reach out and get the help needed at any time. I thought it sounded like a good fit for me. I found that the freedom to learn about the things that interested me made me want to learn more than just being assigned a topic that held little value to me. When studying history I chose the “Wild West” for a time period that I wanted to know and understand better. I even went further and studied famous gunslingers. In culture and language I got to study countries and their cultures that I have always wondered about.

I also appreciated the school workshops that you can attend with other students and the workshops I went to were a lot of fun. I remember going to the CMCA and it had a lot of interesting art sculptures of squirrels made out of recycled foam. There was an exhibit called “Mind Loops” which was these suspended sculptures on the walls made from trash, string, and other recycled materials that would make up these elaborate patterns that were really cool.

If you are thinking about attending Wayfinder you should know that they are very nice and helpful. If you are having trouble with coursework they are good at answering any questions that you may have. If you have trouble focusing in a public school setting, the one-on-one meetings with the teachers may work better for you like they did for me. Another thing to know about Wayfinder is if there is a career you are interested in or want to pursue they will help you and connect you to people in the field you're interested in. Thanks Wayfinder!

“Your talent determines what you can do. Your motivation determines how much you’re willing to do. Your attitude determines how well you do it.”

-Lou Holtz

Katelynn Juco

Lewiston



Wayfinder has been a huge blessing to me in the past 6 years. It gave me the opportunity to attend school and still work and take care of my children, while receiving an education. Given all the life changes and trauma I have been through in the past 6 years, my teacher Julia Johnston has been, and was always by my side to help keep me on track. She also kept me focused on my big goal of finally graduating, something I thought I'd never do. It also helped that I had a friend who was also a student in Passages who always did her best to remind me I'm worthy and capable of getting a diploma, and to not give up. I wanted to give up so many times. One of my favorite parts of this program has been the workshops. I like being able to see and try new things, especially alongside other students. It's nice not to feel like we are doing this alone. I will forever be grateful for the help, love and support I have received from everyone at Wayfinder Schools. This is an amazing program.

Miranda-Jean Leavitt

New Gloucester



My time in the program has been amazing. This school has changed my life so much. If it wasn't for this school I probably would be out of school. They have given me a chance to complete school even with my daughter. It's an amazing experience to bring my daughter to school with me. I've had the best teacher that I can laugh with and talk to. I have met so many great teachers and I consider them as my friends even though they are teachers. I've met so many new people. I've been to so many new places and pushed myself. This school has done so much for me and my daughter. I never thought I would enjoy school so much as I do in this program. My dad wanted me to finish school and make something of myself and this program has helped me do that.

Khai Lehouillier

Edgecomb



I am so grateful for the time I spent at Wayfinder Schools. The self-paced curriculum has allowed me to enjoy learning again without having to adapt to expectations of the traditional school system. I chose to do my passage project on Yin Yoga, which has fostered a new love for meditation. Going forward I plan to use the skills I gained at Wayfinder to explore my various passions with work experiences and travel to discover what I may want to pursue for a career.

“Live your life as an experiment.”
-Pema Chodron

Danielle Maheu

Bath



Wayfinder has meant a lot to me because I get to graduate high school. I didn't think I would have that opportunity ever after I dropped out. This makes me feel like I am doing something with my life. This has been quite the journey, for sure, but my teacher being so patient and nurturing has helped me get through. I don't think I would have been able to without her, but here I am and it feels great.

“The most difficult thing is the decision to act, the rest is merely tenacity. The fears are paper tigers. You can do anything you decide to do. You can act to change and control your life; and the procedure, the process is its own reward.”
-Amelia Earhart

Autumn McIntyre

Pembroke



As a soon-to-be graduate from Wayfinder's Passages Program, I am very grateful to have found my way to this amazing school. Enrolling in this program honestly saved my life. Before Passages I was very lost when it came to school. I honestly thought I was going to drop out at one point.

At the time when I was searching for answers with my education, I was doing half of my day at public school and half at homeschool. It was not working out well. My mom and I were concerned because by continuing to do that, I wasn't going to get my diploma or have a graduation like the rest of my peers.

My mom searched around for schools that offered diplomas, and who would work with my personal lifestyle, offering a home based education with a real certified teacher. Wayfinder allowed me to work at my own pace and focus on real life core skills. Wayfinder was a life-changer for me.

Now I'm graduating a year earlier than expected, getting a graduation ceremony, and a diploma! I've learned so many useful life skills during my time in this program that will actually help me with my future.

I have been accepted to college in the Human Services program and I am excited to begin my next chapter.

Thank you for the amazing experience.

"Not all who wander are lost" is a favorite quote of mine, and it was a favorite of my grandfather as well. He loved the outdoors and going to camp on Upper Wilson Pond. He had this quote written on a piece of paper on the refrigerator at camp. I researched the quote and discovered it is the second line to a poem called "All that Glitters is not Gold" in the Lord of the Rings. The meaning is this: we are not lost because we explore, we are most prepared spiritually and mentally at this moment.

Rianna Morales

Warren



I found out about Wayfinder Schools from a cousin who graduated from the Passages Program. I originally applied to Wayfinder because my grandmother wanted me to finish school. I soon realized I wanted to finish school for myself. After my grandmother died I went down a tough road.

I am learning about myself, and the necessary life skills I've been taught have made my life a lot better. Even though I have been through some rough times, the teachers at Wayfinder worked with me to make it possible for me to graduate. I have learned a lot from this, and am very proud to say my senior project has helped me get my life back on track and where I'm supposed to be. I would like to thank all the teachers at Wayfinder for everything they do for their students!

Kenzie Phifer

Union



I love this school so much, I would not be who I am today without Wayfinder Schools. Four years ago when I first enrolled I was extremely anxiety ridden and wasn't sure who I was. I would have absolutely never been able to be where I am today without the help of my lovely teacher Cindy. Thank you so much for giving me so many amazing opportunities and embracing my love for Japan and studying Japanese. If it weren't for you, I would have never found my job at Peopleplace, where I am officially an assistant teacher. I am so grateful for every single staff member who has supported my journey of learning and personal growth. I think I know myself a little better and for that I thank you all, I love you <3

Raelynn Philbrook

Cushing



When I was in 6th grade my sister lost her love and father to her child. He was a close part of our family. It kind of made everyone unsettled and off, we all had our own ways of grieving. My sister is a huge role model in my life and his death took a toll on everyone. I couldn't focus on school and was trying to manage anxiety and depression. It was hard juggling counseling, medication, and academics. I never enjoyed sports or group activities and it was difficult for me to get along with other students, I preferred to be by myself.

My older sister went through Wayfinder and I watched the opportunities and flexibility that Wayfinder provided and I immediately loved the idea of the program. The school at the time was only accepting parenting teens, and you had to be at least a freshman. I dragged myself through middle school and finished eighth grade, dreading high school. It just so happened Wayfinder opened the program to non-parenting teens and I jumped at the opportunity and started my freshman year of 2019 with my teacher Cindy.

It took some time but Cindy kept me motivated. I got my first job and my anxiety slowly subsided. I started to enjoy meeting new people and looked forward to workshops with other Wayfinder students. I've made many valuable connections through the program and appreciate all of the support and opportunities that Wayfinder has provided. I was able to choose my own senior project and make it personal. I've met amazing people through the project and enjoyed exploring different therapies and self care to help progress my personal growth. Thank you to this school and staff!

"You must do the things you think you cannot do."
-Eleanor Roosevelt