

## **BRIDGING THE GAP**

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Presenters will show that there are still young people in Maine who want to work in Maine's forests. Many of these people are enrolled in Maine's vocational forestry training programs across the state. They will also present information on various vocational educational leadership organizations and show how one in particular, National FFA, can be used to help students in vocational forestry and wood harvesting programs connect with logging contractors, foresters, and others associated with Maine's forest resources. Particular attention will be given to the FFA's Supervised Agricultural Experience program and how this can be used to develop leadership, business, communication, and organizational skills, as well as confidence.

Presenters will also discuss how forming a consortium of vocational forestry educators, forest products industry associations and foresters, logging contractors and others associated with this industry could serve to attract young people as well as enhance and further develop the education and training needed for young people to succeed now and in the near future in Maine's forests.