

COBSCOOK CURRENTS

• Spring 2017 •



NEWS FROM THE
Cobscook Community
Learning Center

Discovery

Dear Friends of Cobscook Community Learning Center,

Greetings from all of us at the CCLC! We hope this letter finds you well.

Here in easternmost Maine, we're experiencing the familiar anticipation of summer. Peas are planted, garden beds are ready, and there is a palpable sense of something new just around the corner. May's warmth arrives each year, and we are treated to the wonder and poignant thrill of being immersed in an ever-changing, living landscape, not knowing exactly what will emerge next in our delighted discovery.

DISCOVERY is the theme of this newsletter. At the CCLC, we're engaged in our own quiet but extremely dynamic season of discovery. It's all about listening and responding.

Good listening is a tremendously active process, as anyone knows who has encountered Brittany Ray, TREE Program Director. She has been listening with unflagging, impassioned, and focused energy for the last eight months to teachers, administrators, students, and community members as she has worked to discover and develop a genuinely collaborative model to address the educational challenges facing children experiencing poverty and trauma.

The long-haul work of discovery can be a creative, collaborative effort to uncover hidden potentials, passions, and strengths. Kara McCrimmon, Lead Teacher of Cobscook Experiential Program for High School Students, is vigorously involved in this work every day. She lets us share a glimpse of an interdisciplinary "Ah-ha" moment in the pages that follow. Avery Danforth, Manager of Retreats and Community Programming, gives us a look behind the scenes at the three-year old Heartwood Lodge, which is becoming what we all hoped it would: a place to nurture deep, immersive listening and collective responding about issues that matter critically to all of us.

We are immensely grateful to each and every one of you for the support you have extended to the CCLC over the years. It is your generosity that feeds the fire of discovery. We invite you, as always, to join us here at this "homeplace," in this landscape we share, where new spaces and collaborations are leading to new opportunities for health, growth, learning, and well-being. Together, with friends, we find a way!

Warmly yours,



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Executive Director

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Cobscook Experiential Program

— FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS —

Trey: “What if you have that glide, and then set the code to glide again?”

Jacob: “So I pick the position where I want it to start and then change the costume each time? I want to find that somewhere in my scripts, and copy that in.”



The students exploring sensors at the Darling Marine Center



Kara McCrimmon
Lead Teacher



Trey and Jacob are hunched together over Jacob’s computer. They’re creating animated models of atomic bonding for chemistry class, a new offering at Cobscook this year. Each student has a different compound – methane, propane, chloric acid. Jacob has tetrafluoromethane, and he’s trying to make four fluorine atoms fly across the screen at specific times, link with a carbon atom, and lock into place. He’s not satisfied with his timing. Trey is helping him figure out the right code, using a Massachusetts Institute of Technology coding program called Scratch. The coding part of the project is a skill they’re learning for a class called Computational Thinking and Digital Applications. This is another of Cobscook’s new courses, the result of work last year and this to expand from a two- to a four-year high school program that serves Washington County students.

“You’re doing it that way? There’s an easier way!” Trey is leaning over to Gus’s computer now. He’s figured out the coding part of the process, and is now teaching his classmates. “Can I help anyone out?” he calls out as he moves on from Gus’s computer.

*Not just “learning by doing,”
but “learning by reflection on doing.”*

Cobscook: Interdisciplinary Learning

Cobscook, which operates through a contract with Calais High School, is inspired by a number of models of education, one of which is interdisciplinary learning. Animating compounds is one example of an interdisciplinary approach. To take



An opportunity to study science, writing, leadership, language, and more in the classroom, in the community, and beyond.

the interdisciplinary example further, Cobscook students are also taking a health and wellness class this year. Right now students are studying nutrition. As part of that, they've researched the role of specific minerals in body function and shared their findings to one another. The minerals – calcium, copper, sodium, iodine, etc. – are all elements they've been studying in chemistry, and now they're making connections between chemistry and physical health. Soon they'll make "mineral meals," lunches prepared by the group that represent nutritionally complete offerings. With interdisciplinary education, it's all connected.

When asked, most of this year's students will report that they love learning chemistry the most. There was almost an audible cheer when they figured out the pattern for valence electrons in the outer shell of an atomic model. Just as our students have discovered new passions for chemistry, computing, or even kelp aquaculture (another project this year), our Cobscook staff are anticipating a new voyage of discovery – the adventure of delivering a full, four-year interdisciplinary and experiential program at CCLC, with the opportunity to study science, writing, leadership, language, and more in the classroom, in the community, and beyond.

What is Experiential Education?

One model of education that Cobscook follows is that of experiential education – not just "learning by doing," but "learning by reflection on doing." Another way to think of experiential education is summed up like this: *what, so what, and now what*. *What* is the content or the skill – what are we learning. *So what* relates to meaning-making - why are we learning this? *Now what* is the action – what do we do with this skill or information? The small personalized setting at Cobscook gives students and staff the space and flexibility to consider what, so what, and now what as a group. That's the real power of experiential education. Now what?

2016 Financial Information

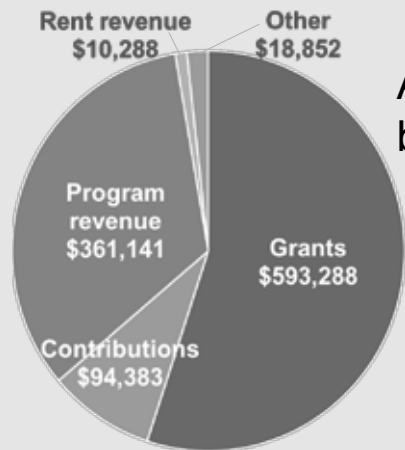
Total Revenue: \$1,077,952
Total Expenditures: \$1,063,149



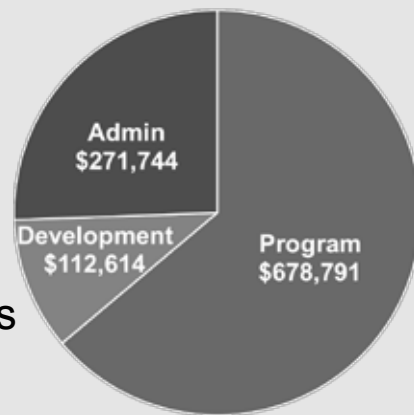
Revenue by Program



Expenditures by Program



Agency Revenue by Source



Agency Expenditures by Source

Welcome To Our New Team Member!

Dylan Pardue, AmeriCorps VISTA, Marketing and IT



Dylan is the newest addition to the CCLC team. He moved to Washington County in 2012, and grew up in Brunswick, ME. He is a graduate of the Cobscook Experiential Program, where he spent 2 years documenting everyday activities and expeditions through photography and video. He joined AmeriCorps in September 2016, and has worked on many projects, including videos, a new website, and this newsletter! Dylan is also a freelance videographer, and owner of Dylan Pardue Media (dylanpardue.com).

— TREE —

TRANSFORMING RURAL EXPERIENCE IN EDUCATION

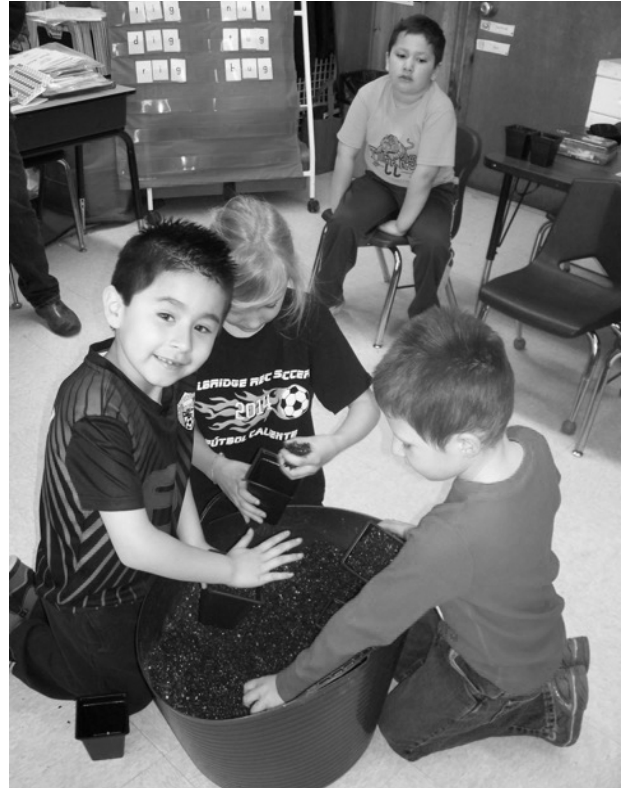
Brittany Ray
Director



About a decade ago, as I flipped through a catalog of classroom supplies, I saw a poster of a young woman, suitcase in hand, looking out over an aquamarine sea. Written across the sky were the words: “The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes, but in having new eyes. - Marcel Proust.” I ordered the poster, and it hung on the wall

of my school counseling office for many years. It was a helpful reminder for all of us working with students to be “emotional detectives,” and not assume that, when students were withdrawn or acting out, these were behavioral choices. Instead, it was often necessary to look with new eyes through the lens of trauma, and understand that under stress or anxiety the brain stops forming new connections, making it very difficult, if not impossible, to learn.

Washington County statistics reveal low levels of educational attainment, high rates of poverty, and high rates of addiction and overdoses. Too many students come to school every day carrying the trauma of constant hunger, physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, and the turmoil of households experiencing addiction. The CCLC has long-known this, and launched TREE as a response. Washington County schools are filled with administrators, teachers, and others committed to using scientific discoveries and best practices to create change for our children. They are hungry, even famished, for support in creating socially and emotionally safe environments where all children can learn. Schools want to be trauma-, poverty-, and equity-informed climates. They know that trauma is toxic to the brain, and are ready to utilize research revealing the brain’s plasticity and potential to heal.



TREE's mission is to strengthen schools and communities by developing a strengths-based, poverty-, trauma-, and equity-informed approach that will fortify rural school environments and lead to healthier and more successful outcomes for all students.

During the fall and early winter, TREE interviewed 22 administrators and conducted focus groups with 131 teachers and 186 students. Students clearly articulated the importance of caring teachers and stable relationships at school. One 7th grade boy told us, "Sometimes things are so crazy at home that I look forward to coming here to school where life is calm and predictable." Teachers described students struggling both academically and behaviorally due to the toxic stress at home. One teacher commented, "Sometimes my students are held hostage by fear and anxiety about what is happening at home. Learning multiplication just isn't a priority when a child wonders, 'Is Mom ok and will Dad be going to jail again?'"

Schools cannot create this change alone. TREE, working in collaboration with educators and researchers from Colby College and The University of Maine, is engaged in an intensive design process so that we can support schools in this voyage forward. By providing schools with mental health supports onsite, by providing coaching and professional learning opportunities for teachers to embed social and emotional learning (SEL) within the curriculum, and by enhancing opportunities for student voice and civic engagement, TREE is committed to supporting this change in our rural landscape.

I don't have that Proust poster anymore, but I wish I did. I would offer it to every hard-working teacher and administrator as a symbol of our shared work. With our new eyes we will transform schools so that all students have an equal chance to live the life they want to live.



The CCLC has convened a robust team of local stakeholders and state and national experts in rural education, poverty and trauma, community mental health, and positive youth development to help achieve TREE's objectives.

— HEARTWOOD LODGE —

Avery Danforth
Manager of Retreats and
Community Programming



Heartwood Lodge is putting out the welcome mat for its third year of operations, and the fifty-bed building has never looked better.

Our team takes great pride and care in the day-to-day maintenance and comforts associated in helping visitors settle in and relax for their stay. Whether the experience at the CCLC is for a couple of hours or several weeks, each visitor discovers something new about their group, their field of interest, and themselves.

In the past year, biology students, teachers, birders, culinary artists-in-training, physicians, fishermen, potters, geologists, Wabanaki youth, boards and organizational leaders, community groups, and many more, have all utilized the Lodge in their own unique way. Some groups use the Lodge only for sleeping, while spending their daylight hours in the Commons classroom, or exploring the greater Downeast region's extraordinarily diverse natural and social communities. Others find the beauty, quiet, and intimacy of the Lodge's library or lounge to be a perfect setting for their retreats.

Hand-in-hand with the Lodge, the Commons has been providing the space for workshops and retreats at the CCLC since 2007. While we strive to complete the Heartwood Classrooms, the Commons remains the focal point for meals, concerts, lectures, private events, and classes. The Commons also houses one of the CCLC's most well-loved and utilized facilities, the community arts and pottery studio.

The CCLC was equipped with distance learning technology in 2007 and a second unit was added in 2011. This feature has been invaluable for creating access to education and collaboration. Our distance learning infrastructure has recently expanded to include a state-of-the-art Polycom video conferencing system with interactive white board. This technology supports connections between our geographically distant communities. It is used by several groups, including those

“The strength of your educational programs is truly impressive and your facility is the best I’ve seen in the state for conducting an overnight retreat.”

Shane Moeykens, Ph.D., UM, Director of Research Administration & EPSCoR



“Heartwood Lodge was the perfect place for our retreat. It’s a welcoming, beautiful, affordable setting. And, the food was delicious!”

*Jamie Bissonette Lewey,
Chair, Maine Indian Tribal State
Commission, Director, A Center for
Community Healing*

MAKE A RESERVATION

Call us at 207-733-2233 and ask for Avery Danforth (ext 321), or email us at avery@thecccl.org.

Visit heartwoodlodge.com to learn more and watch a virtual tour video!

working to increase opportunities and infrastructure associated with the marine economy and the health of Washington County residents. The three units are available to anyone utilizing the CCLC for educational or enrichment purposes.

The richness of the Heartwood Lodge experience is reflected in the comments, like those offered on this page, that we often receive from programs and individuals that access the campus. Please consider this an invitation to think of Heartwood Lodge as a perfect setting and resource for upcoming programs, events, or educational offerings! The CCLC staff are available to guide you through the planning process and ensure that your group experiences the depth that our campus and this region offers.

“Heartwood Lodge is the perfect place for students of the environment to study field ecology and applied conservation biology, and is a naturalist’s paradise.”

Lindsay Seward, UMaine Faculty and Program Coordinator



Coming Soon: Heartwood Classrooms!

We are thrilled to announce that the CCLC was recently awarded a \$275,000 matching challenge grant from the Harold Alfond Foundation® as a capstone toward completion of Heartwood Classrooms. With this very generous grant commitment, we are one step closer to beginning construction of the new facility, which we are driving to complete in 2018.

We are 90% of the way to campaign completion!

The Classrooms facility will be a 3,345 square-foot building featuring a lobby, 1,200 square-foot classroom and conference space, 600 square-foot classroom, and office, built by local tradespeople using locally-sourced materials and green building practices. It fills the need for a fully-equipped retreat center in far Downeast Maine, focused on education, ecology, arts, social justice, health, wellness, and the marine economy.

In 2010, the CCLC launched a \$2.8 million capital campaign to build Heartwood Lodge and Classrooms. By 2014, we had successfully raised over \$1.9 million, allowing us to complete and open Heartwood Lodge and pour the foundation for the Classrooms.

We are now 90% of the way to campaign completion! We invite you to join us in this final push to raise the \$275,000 match. Learn more by contacting the CCLC’s executive director, Alan Furth: alan@thecccl.org or 207-733-2233.

Enormous thanks to — our 2016 donors! — YOU MAKE EVERYTHING WE DO POSSIBLE

General Support

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(In memory of Tim Roy)
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Ruth Allen
(In memory of Tim Roy)
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Paul and Janet Weston

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COBSCOOK CURRENTS

NEWS FROM THE COBSCOOK COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTER

Spring 2017

COURSE SAMPLER

MAY
2

Pottery Classes
Tues. and Wed. • Ongoing

MAY
13

Woody Plant Walk
1-4pm • Identify local plants

JUN
10

Hugelkultur Workshop
1-4pm • Self fertilizing gardens!

JUL
8

Machias River Conservation Camp
Two week summer program for teens

Save the date!



Pottery is back at the CCLC!

General classes for all ages and skill levels are available, with hand building and wheel throwing. Visit the Events page on our website to learn more, and see upcoming classes.

We have many more upcoming classes! Check our website for updates on class offerings:
cclc.me/events