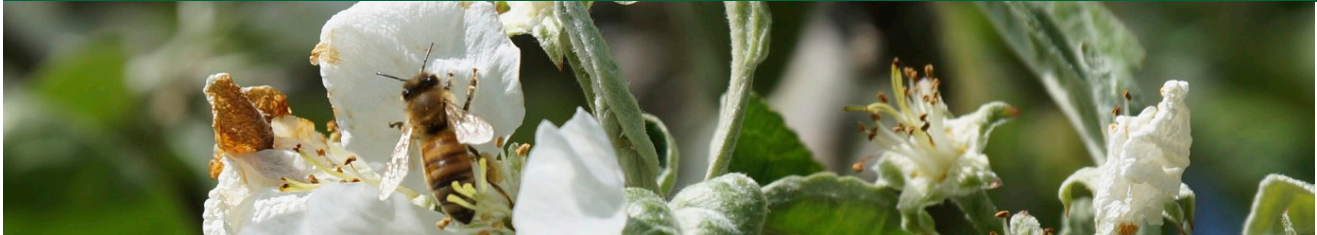


# Cobscook Currents

Spring 2018



# The Growing Season: Nourishment and Tending



## Welcome to the Spring/Summer Cobscook Currents, the edition that spans “the growing season.”

In this edition, we thank and honor each of you who so generously contributed the essential gifts of funding, time, and talent to carry us across 2017 and into another cycle of generative work to meet our mission *to create responsive educational opportunities that strengthen personal, community, and global well-being.*

### 2018 is a special year. Here's why:


- It marks Cobscook Community Learning Center's journey across its 20th year!
- Cobscook Experiential Program graduates the first group of students who have completed all four years of high school in the program! Join us for graduation on June 11th as we celebrate our students with their families and friends and with our partner, Calais High School.
- TREE, Transforming Rural Experience in Education, was formally launched with three Washington County partner schools in January. TREE is a 5-year research pilot project aimed 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.
- CCLC's classroom building will be completed later this year, making our campus an even more ideal site for intensive immersion programs, workshops, and retreats. Visit our website or call to arrange for your retreat, workshop or event at CCLC!
- And, finally, CCLC has initiated a thoughtful executive leadership succession process in which founding Executive Director Alan Furth shifts to serve CCLC's mission and goals as Development Director, and, new Interim Executive Director Sanna McKim guides our staff and works with the board to help inform the future work of CCLC and assist in preparing the organization to welcome its next permanent Executive Director.

This is such an important and exciting time for CCLC! It is a time for thanks and for focus as we work together each day building upon all that has been accomplished in the first twenty years, tending this season's essential educational programs, and preparing the ground for the next generation of CCLC's service in our communities.

With special thanks to you all,

  
**Alan Furth**  
Development Director  
Co-Founder



  
**Sarah Strickland**  
Board President



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## Common Focus, Collective Impact

### Meeting some of the people behind CCLC

There is a human being behind each contribution to CCLC. Each gift is received and acknowledged as a personal expression of support or participation, and each is essential. This edition of Cobscook Currents celebrates some of the many people whose energies combine to keep CCLC's innovative programs and welcoming facilities going and growing.

*The articles that follow feature donors, community partners, and CCLC staff members who represent the heart and soul of the CCLC.*

### From the Heart

#### A Thank You to Michael and Monica Dimino

Michael and Monica are very much global citizens. Monica has been a professional astrologer since 1970 and enjoys a large international clientele. Michael is a multilingual Harvard graduate who, for the past thirty years, has served as a business adviser with the Massachusetts Small Business Development Center, helping immigrants, artists, writers, and other entrepreneurs strive to transform dreams into reality. Monica and Michael love CCLC's mission and vision, its impact, and the promise it holds; their support can be seen and felt at CCLC every day. They help keep the home fires burning with their annual contribution and they have made additional strategic contributions. As lovers of nature and knowledge and in support of CCLC's outdoor education programs, they gave the complete set of Peterson Field Guides which grace the Rice Hall Library. They honored their son Martin, who has very limited mobility, and Michael's mother, who dedicated her life to ensuring access to educational opportunity for all, with a gift that made a wheelchair-accessible room in Heartwood Lodge possible. Most recently, they have made a major contribution to help us meet the Harold Alfond Foundation matching grant to complete CCLC's classrooms. Thank you, Michael and Monica, for your friendship and support.



## Staff Profile • Pat Mallar

Joined: 2005  
Finance Manager

**Pat's Impact:** *Pat's attention to detail combined with her compassionate nature makes her approachable and easy to work with while ensuring the critical financial and human resource details that keep an organization functioning are in order. While she is often behind the scenes making payroll and health insurance happen for CCLC staff, one co-worker said, "when I am unsure of a work situation and even in a personal situation, sitting with Pat always makes me feel better."*

Pat was introduced to CCLC when she attended two workshops in its early years focused on giving voice to community needs and promoting social change for women. She became even more drawn to CCLC when she learned of its focus on promoting wellbeing for all. When CCLC called on her to help with payroll on a day thereafter dubbed "Pat Mallar Day" due to her critical support in a time of need, she decided to stay on as a permanent employee. When describing her dedication to CCLC over the years she reflected, "It feeds me on a personal level to be a part of CCLC's mission, vision, and values."



Portrait by Ellen Harasimowicz

*"I look at the CCLC as a navigational aid—a lighthouse with a bright beacon, helping people navigate new experiences, education, and community cohesiveness. People are learning, prospering and growing, in ways they maybe never could have imagined, because of the CCLC. I know I have, as both an employee and as a participant."*

The warmth that Pat imbues her work with at CCLC came through in reflections from her co-workers. From supplying water balloons to liven up the annual Pat Mallar Day celebration to welcoming newcomers, distributing paychecks, overseeing finances and being an empathetic listener, Pat makes CCLC's work possible and the workplace welcoming. As one co-worker put it, Pat "naturally makes a workplace feel like home."

## Staff Profile • Kevin Thompson

Joined: 2000  
IT and Facilities Manager

*“Kevin’s work enables the rest of us to communicate with the community.”*



Portrait by Ellen Harasimowicz

**Kevin’s Impact:** *Through his drive to help CCLC provide opportunities that might not otherwise be available, Kevin does whatever it takes to support CCLC’s work. From combing through the facilities during power outages and snowstorms to making sure everything is functioning to managing the entire information technology system to providing pottery classes to the community, one co-worker described Kevin as “the axle that keeps the CCLC turning.”*

Back when CCLC was just an idea between community members, Kevin was demonstrating his skills as a potter at the Grand Lake Stream Folk Art Festival on a rainy summer day. Alan Furth, future Executive Director of CCLC, was there with his band in need of a dry place to play music. Kevin offered some room under his dry tent where he was demonstrating his craft and they struck up a friendship. Alan described watching festival-goers on that day “become mesmerized by the transformations of clay being conjured

by his skilled hands from mound to elegant vessel...Kevin was both a skilled artist but clearly also a skilled teacher.” Not long after, Alan and the other founders of CCLC invited Kevin to design and teach one of CCLC’s first educational offerings: Earth, Form, and Fire: a Raku pottery class.

*“My main drive for working here is to provide opportunities that wouldn’t otherwise be available.”*

Kevin then became one of the first paid staff of CCLC and committed himself to its development. He created CCLC’s first website, helped clear the land for the first building, and to this day continues to make sure all systems on campus run smoothly. This dedication to the people and place that compose CCLC came through in reflections from his co-workers; as one of them said, “He genuinely cares about us and it shows.” As a potter, Kevin sees potential in an often messy lump of earth then patiently forms the clay into a masterpiece. Similarly, Kevin saw the potential of CCLC at the beginning and has patiently and masterfully embedded beauty and function into the organization ever since.

# Huge thanks to our 2017 donors

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# You make everything we do possible!

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*Every gift to CCLC is essential  
and much appreciated. We  
have carefully reviewed this  
list to include everyone who  
supported our work in 2017.  
If your name has been omitted  
in error, please let us know.*

## Heartwood Classrooms Campaign and Construction: *Approaching the Finish Line for Both!*

**The race is on!** The last Northern White Cedar shingle from Phil Gardner's shingle mill will have been nailed into place by Chris Goodwin's skilled team of builders by the time this newsletter hits the press. Thank you to the many businesses, foundations, and individuals who have carried this campaign so close to the finish line! Every dollar given towards the classrooms from now to March 30, 2019, gets doubled by a matching grant! This includes all of you with generous 100 Hearts pledge balances. Please enter "Open the Classrooms!" in the memo line of your check, or go to [cclc.me/capstone](http://cclc.me/capstone) to donate online. At the time of this writing we have, with the remaining 100 Hearts pledges, \$17,797 to secure. Please help us cross the finish line this year! Thank you.

## Staff Profile • Laura Thomas

Joined: 2017  
TREE Resource Coach

**Laura's Impact:** *Laura joined CCLC as a Resource Coach for TREE in August 2017. She has been able to fold her many years of experience as an elementary school educator for English language learners into her new role of supporting the resilience of schools and communities through TREE.*



After learning that the TREE program was offering schools resources to meet student needs and address barriers, Laura knew that she wanted to be part of making TREE a success in Milbridge, one of the schools she has worked in for the past seven years. "I truly believe in the program's ability to effect lasting change. I want to be a part of making education and teaching more of what students need it to be," she said. Co-workers describe Laura as cheerful, compassionate, and dedicated to making a difference to the health and well-being of children in this area with a "drive that is infectious."

## Business Feature • Sean Daye, Machias Savings Bank



**Sean's Impact:** *Sean has served as CCLC's primary business partner and loan officer. He has also guided CCLC through challenging financial decisions due to his in-depth understanding of the needs of small non-profits and his ability to make financial processes easy.*

Sean had admired CCLC's work for many years before he had the opportunity to become involved in Machias Savings Bank's pledge to help construct Heartwood Lodge. His later involvement with CCLC came from his sincere appreciation for CCLC's community impact: "I've always been particularly impressed with their alternative education program that provides a much-needed service for youth in our area," he said, "I love the variety of classes CCLC offers and their ability to tailor their offerings to meet the needs of the community at large. I look forward to an ongoing partnership between Machias Savings Bank and CCLC, as together we continue to work to improve the quality of life, take responsibility for our environment, and innovate education in our region."



## Staff Profile • Bonnie Lyons

Joined: 2005  
Custodial Coordinator

**Bonnie's Impact:** *Bonnie takes great pride in keeping CCLC buildings clean so that everyone who spends any time on campus feels welcome and comfortable. She also volunteers for CCLC promoting programs and opportunities within her hometown of Lubec.*



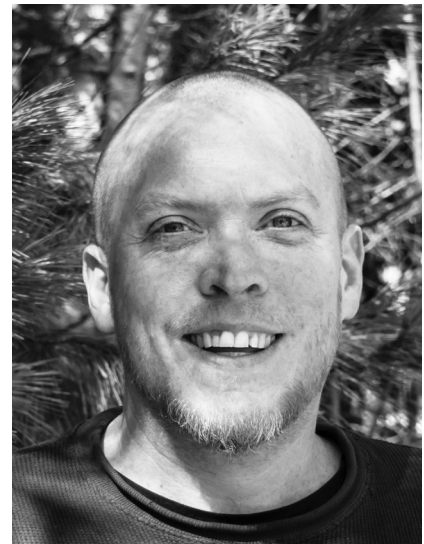
Bonnie started working at CCLC in 2005. What began as a convenient job opportunity grew into much more—a warm workplace community that she grew to love. “I love my job and all my co-workers. I couldn’t imagine working anywhere else,” she said. Bonnie’s co-workers spoke to her commitment not only to facility cleanliness but also to being a lifelong learner that encourages others to do the same. She promotes, attends, and volunteers at CCLC classes and events, especially if they have to do with her personal passions in permaculture. Bonnie even volunteered to conduct interviews for CCLC’s TREE program. As one of her co-workers put it, “I often leave Bonnie and think, ‘wow—there is nothing that woman can’t do.’”

## Staff Profile • Ryan Cross

Joined: 2013  
Groundskeeper / Maintenance

**Ryan's Impact:** *Ryan is responsible for the maintenance and landscaping on CCLC's campus. He imparts a sense of whimsy and care throughout the campus. From elaborate gardens to secret elf doors to smiley faces in snow piles, Ryan brings intention and talent to every corner of CCLC.*

Ryan first came to CCLC as a class participant then a volunteer board member. After considerable volunteer-work, he became a member of the staff. In his own words, “I cannot shake the cosmic nudge to serve. To me, this was and is the type of place the world needs: a safe place for growth that welcomes all.” His co-workers rhapsodize about his infectious smile, hardworking nature, and artistic talent. In response to one of Ryan’s landscape creations, one co-worker said, “The beautiful heart-shaped landscape piece he created moved me to tears when I looked out my office window.”



## Community Supporter • Wanda Corey



Wanda with her son, Nick

**Wanda's Impact:** *As a local community member and business owner, Wanda has serviced CCLC vehicles, served on the Board of Directors, welcomed a Cobscook Experiential Program student into her home, promoted CCLC programs, and donated financially to CCLC.*

Listing all the ways that Wanda has supported CCLC in this small space would be impossible—but the diversity of ways that she has demonstrated her support, both personally and through her businesses, is quite remarkable. One CCLC staff-member described Wanda as “a spectacular friend of CCLC.” Wanda described CCLC as having “given me and my son a beautiful, safe, friendly space to spend time learning and exploring. The people of CCLC are some of the best on earth.”

*“CCLC offers a much-needed alternative to traditional classroom learning for our young people.”*

## Community Supporter • Mary Anne Spearin

**Mary Anne's Impact:** *Mary Anne has served on CCLC's Board and has worked to support the development of the Transforming Rural Experience in Education (TREE) program. Now, as the principal at Calais High School, she continues to support CCLC through their partnership with the Cobscook Experiential Program.*

When Mary Anne first learned of TREE, she said, “I want to help make this happen. This is exactly what we need.” Born and raised in Washington County, Mary Anne recognizes both the joys and the barriers to residents here and appreciates CCLC's work to reduce those barriers. As one CCLC staff-member said, “It is a great privilege to be working in partnership with this dedicated educational leader.”

*“I am invested in ensuring the education of all students.”*



## Staff Profile • Michael Giudilli

Joined: 2012  
Cobscook Teacher



Portrait by Ellen Harasimowicz

**Michael's Impact:** *Michael first came to CCLC not in response to an open position, but with an idea for an outdoor program that would be accessible to Washington County youth. He helped create and run the Cobscook Outdoor Adventure Club to make outdoor programs for 8-14 year-olds accessible, then became a teacher for the Cobscook Experiential Program, where he continues to teach and learn with high school students through outdoor, hands-on experiences.*

Michael first moved to the region to attend University of Maine at Machias (UMM) after travels with his grandparents as a child revealed to him the grit and tenacity of coastal communities. Reflecting on his decision to move here, he said, "I came to Machias to be a part of a community that was strong and resilient;

I found it. I believe that CCLC's work aids all people in leveraging their strengths and skills to improve their lives and the lives of the people around them. In short, CCLC makes our community stronger and that's something that I can get behind 100%."

*"Michael had a huge impact on my own education when I participated in the high school program. Michael is a person that I, and many other students, look up to as a role model. He's an awesome educator." -Dylan Pardue, Cobscook Experiential Program Alumnus, AmeriCorps VISTA serving at CCLC*

As one of his co-workers put it, Michael "shines a positive light on the CCLC through his efforts to incorporate learning about the natural environment with a sense of how community and nature are connected."



*Michael with students on their recent trip to Philadelphia*



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# Cobscook Currents

News from the Cobscook Community Learning Center

Spring 2018

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