

It was a Maine "Sweep" on March 29 at New England Camp Conference

Two long-time Maine camp professionals and Alford Lake Camp were honored at the annual ACA, New England Camp Conference



Catriona Logan Sangster, winner of the Meritorious Service Award, with her husband, Andy. Photos on this page by Annie Bowe (Camp O-AT-KA).



ACA Board President Ian Moorhouse, left, stands with representatives of Alford Lake Camp, winner of the Leadership and Service Award. Left to right are Moorhouse, and Alford Lake Camp's Page Fairman Rich, Sue McMullan, and Betsy Brayley.



Terri Mulks, center, New England Conference Co-Chair, winner of the Peter Kerns Award, with her Camp Susan Curtis team. Left to right, Scott Merrow, Brandon Bricchetto, Terri Mulks, Dakota Bricchetto, and Megan LaCroix.



The award winners, together with MSC Executive Director Lucy Norvell. Pictured left to right are Catriona Logan Sangster, Camp Wawenock, Page Fairman Rich, Alford Lake Camp, Lucy Norvell, Sue McMullan and Betsy Brayley, Alford Lake Camp, and Terri Mulks, Camp Susan Curiis.

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207.518.9557
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MESSAGE FROM THE MSC PRESIDENT

APRIL 2025

Mud season in Maine. That magical fifth season between Winter and Spring. For a little while, we're forced to stay off fields and roads and take a moment, the last chance to catch our collective breath before the madness of the summer. So, while mud season has its downsides, it's a great chance for MSC members to reflect and plan.



This off season has been perhaps the busiest and most productive I can recall. Our sibling organization, MYCA, has done a mind-boggling amount of work shepherding the new Chapter 208 rules through, while keeping their eyes on several other prizes.

Our MSC engine room, the Education Committee, organized both the robust Migis Lodge gathering last September and a valuable Winter Workshop focused on camp and climate change in January. That same January event included the Business Networking Extravaganza – easily the best event on the calendar of our business members – planned by the Business Committee. The Staffing Committee orchestrated a first-of-its-kind, two-day, three-campus staff hiring blitz in conjunction with UMaine and Husson University. Our DEI Committee has been busy arranging an important event in late April aimed at supporting trans and nonbinary campers and staff. The Level Ground Initiative is in full swing, planning to make camp experiences possible for deserving youth in summer 2025. And our Membership Committee and new Stewardship Committee are busy planning for an even stronger MSC moving forward.

None of this is possible, of course, without the outstanding leadership of our MSC/MYCA team, Executive Director Lucy Norvell, and staff Raine Kerhin and Kris Millard, as well as MYCA/MSC counsels Newell Augur and Nancy Savage Marcus.

I must also acknowledge the Mainers who received major awards at the ACA New England conference, including former MSC President Cat Sangster, incoming MSC President Terri Mulks, and MSC member camp Alford Lake Camp. Three MSC members were also honored at the national level in February: Fritz Seving of Camp Wildwood with CODA's Speedy Altman Award; Laura Blaisdell with the ACA National Service Award and Greg Shute, director of Northern and Coastal Properties Chewonki Foundation, New England, with the Special Recognition Award for promoting camp on a national level.

I am extremely proud of and grateful to this organization and its members. Our work has a profound impact on tens of thousands of campers every summer. MSC is working hard every day to make sure it just keeps getting better.

Matt Pines, MSC Board President, Maine Teen Camp Co-Director

MYCA UPDATE

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

For the past 15 months, representatives from both the MYCA and MSC boards have worked through a stakeholder process with the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), specifically the Health Inspector Program (HIP), which is the department that regulates youth camp licensing in Maine. We are near the end of this process with the DHHS releasing the proposed version of the Chapter 208 rule in late February. The public hearing and comment period is now closed, and we await final promulgation of the rule, which will be within 120 days from March 27th.



MYCA is not opposing this updated rule, however that does not mean we agree with everything. MYCA has submitted final comments on seven sections. Some comments are simple edits and others are requests for significant clarification. DHHS has stated that licensed youth camps will be inspected under this new rule starting summer 2025. MYCA has hosted member education webinars regarding this process and the new rule, so please contact Lucy if you would like to see the recordings.

In other news, at the end of February, MYCA hosted an event in the Hall of Flags at the Maine State House in Augusta. A variety of camps and MSC business members were invited to spend the morning speaking with legislators, staff and department representatives. This was MYCA's third such event in six years (held during the first session of each new legislature) and it has been a great benefit in terms of advocating about the importance of Maine summer camps for all children. Thank you to everyone that attended.

New and updated memos for membership will be published in the Hall Monitor soon (and ultimately posted on the MSC website resources page). They will include Federal Motor Coach Safety Act clarifications, the 2025 Employment memo, and

requirements camps must follow for pre/post-season groups (e.g. hosting weddings) in a new Eating & Lodging License memo. We appreciate our partnership with attorney Nancy Savage Marcus (Curtis Thaxter) to keep our membership updated on these topics.

Be sure to review Newell Augur's most recent legislative update. Newell, MYCA's government relations attorney (Pierce Atwood) and his team keep an eye on pending legislation, as well as rulemaking, which could affect Maine camps. There are many labor/employment bills to watch this session, and the impact of Maine's new Paid Family Medical Leave (PFML) law is taking up a lot of time at the State House with numerous proposed bills containing amendments to the law. Although none of the proposed bills that are likely to pass contain changes in the requirements for seasonal employers, MYCA will continue to follow these bills and will update membership.



[Click here for Newell Augur's legislative update](#)

Laura Ordway
President MYCA Board
Winona Camps, laura@winonacamps.com

MYCA (Maine Youth Camp Association) is an affiliated organization to Maine Summer Camps (MSC). MYCA's mission is to monitor, publicly comment and interpret state and federal legislation on behalf of MSC, with the purpose of furthering the welfare of camps in Maine. We maintain relationships with agencies and policy officials for camp advocacy. Additionally, our 501(c)(4) non-profit status allows for limited activities supporting political campaigns. As a member of MSC, your camp is also a member of MYCA. If applicable, any LDs and laws in rulemaking outlined above have been more thoroughly explained in a Legislative Report which is sent to MSC members prior to the annual and semi-annual membership meetings, or in the MYCA Moment section of The Hall Monitor.

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Catriona Logan Sangster, Terri Mulks, and Alford Lake Camp Honored at New England Camp Conference

■ **Catriona Logan Sangster**, of Camp Wawenock, received the Meritorious Service Award in recognition of her many and wide-ranging contributions. The award honors individuals who have demonstrated exceptional contributions to ACA, New England, and the organized camp community. Recipients have shown a consistent pattern of excellence, benefiting ACA on regional or national levels through outstanding service and initiative.

Cat has served for six years on the ACA, New England board and has chaired the organization's DEIB committee for as many years. At MSC, she is a founding member of the Indigenous Neighbors Working Group, which several years ago developed the Indigenous Appropriation Assessment tool for which the group was honored with an ACA National award in 2024. A long-time MSC board member, Cat has served as the MSC board president and the MSC Education Committee Chair.

"I am not the first person to say, yet I truly believe it - we grow by giving," Cat said. "I'm grateful to be a part of a profession in which we work so collaboratively to do our best to provide meaningful and transformative experiences for young people. I'm honored to be recognized and thankful for the opportunity to work with and learn from so many others!"

■ The New England Camp Conference also recognized Camp Susan Curtis director **Terri Mulks**, who received the Peter Kerns Award for the Advancement of Professional Development.

The Peter Kerns Award is given to an individual, group or organization that has shown extraordinary commitment to the development of camp professionals. The award celebrates the life of Peter Kerns, who inspired and challenged us to continually enhance the camp experience for all.

Terri, director of Camp Susan Curtis since 2010, was cited for embodying the values of learning and growing: "her dedication to the camp industry is undeniable," the award video citation stated. "She consistently tries to improve herself while helping others grow, making a lasting impact on young professionals, peers, and the broader camp community."

"Her contributions have strengthened ACA, New England and Maine camps, making us all better in the process."

"I am very honored to be recognized with this particular award because I am so passionate around training our camp leaders and the professionalizing of our industry as whole," Terri said following the conference. "Everything that we learn we hand down to our staff and our campers, strengthening the impact of camp every day. A huge thank you to everyone that made this a reality!"

■ **Alford Lake Camp** was given a Leadership and Service Award, which recognizes individuals, groups or organizations for their substantial contributions to ACA New England. The awards are given for leadership or service to the camp community through categories such as visionary trailblazing, excellence in leadership, emerging leader, volunteer service, board service, outstanding mentor, or other significant actions deemed worthy of recognition. Alford Lake Camp Director Sue McMullan, Assistant Director Betsy Brayley, and Director of Communications and Marketing Page Fairman Rich were on hand to accept the award.

The award recognized the 50th anniversary of Alford Lake Camp's Appalachian Mountain Trip (AMT), a seven-week trip on the Appalachian Mountain Trail designed for campers "looking for an advanced challenge beyond the familiar comfort of their home camp community," the award video citation stated. This 300-mile "unplugged journey" is one "where bonds and connections are made as a group encounters a variety of characters through-hiking the trail."

"It is an honor to be recognized by our colleagues when it comes to leadership and service to others," said McMullan. "I guess the most important part of this award is that it is not just for Alford Lake Camp and the Appalachian Mountain Trail trip we offer, but a reminder to all of us as Camping Professionals, that our service to others is a way of life and a gift that we give to others without sometimes even knowing the impact. So, thank you all for your support and recognition and please remember The Good Work you are doing for others and the impact that you and we are making in the world. What an AMAZING PROFESSION we are in together." ■

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MSC Well Represented at ACA New England Camp Conference

M^{sc} camping professionals, including owners, directors, and members of leadership teams, appeared in full force at the annual New England Camp Conference. And Maine was prominent among the conference's award winners, as well. (See p. 4)

With eight formal educational workshops over three days, plus "lunch and learn" opportunities, roundtables, a robust Expo, and Maine's annual gathering in the Doubletree Hotel's Penstock venue, there was something for everyone.

On March 28, MSC members gathered for a state meeting and social (sponsored by Norway Savings Bank and Chalmers Camp Insurance) where they heard information including the Chapter 208 rules, legislative updates, and a report regarding new Federal Motor Coach Safety Act regulations. MSC Executive Director Lucy Norvell gave a brief presentation, and Level Ground Initiative Coordinator Raine Kerhin described Level Ground's expanded scope. Mike Douglass (Camp Bishopswood) shared information about mentoring availability, and Ajay Henry-Hill (Maine Teen Camp) invited members to attend two upcoming DEI events, including an in-person gathering at the Center for Grieving Children on April 30 to discuss supporting trans and nonbinary campers and staff.

Maine camping professionals are active locally, regionally, and nationally. The New England Conference was yet another opportunity to witness the vast participation of MSC's cohesive and collegial community. ■



Camp Kawanhee's Kenley Perry, Bailey Scott and Therese Bonasera



Susie Sudduth Hammond (Wyonegonic Camps) and Jeffrey Dropkiin and Clay Miles (Winona Camps)



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Catherine Peterson and Joe Erdmannsdoerfer of Maine Hearts of Pine soccer club

Business Networking Extravaganza Brings Together 50+ Vendors, Scores of MSC Members

The 2025 Business Networking Extravaganza offered MSC business and camp members the opportunity to connect, discussing vendors' goods and services, current trends, and camps' needs for the upcoming summer season.

"The Annual Business Networking Extravaganza was one of our best and biggest," Business Committee Chair Arleen Shepherd reported at the MSC Semi-Annual Meeting on March 20.

With 52 participating businesses in attendance, scores of MSC camp members had the opportunity to engage with current and potential vendors. Of course, the event ended with the legendary Business Networking Extravaganza Raffle, where dozens of prizes went to lucky camp members. The grand prize, a two-night stay at the Higgins Beach Inn (a Migis Hotel Group property), went to Camp Ketcha's Liz Tully.

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Winter Workshop Addresses Climate Change Impacts

Experts offer information and guidance

Maine camps must be resilient, enact careful planning, and consider their own unique circumstances when considering climate change impacts. Three environmental experts told 90 camp professionals at the annual **Maine Summer Camps Winter Workshop** on January 29.

The workshop, planned by the MSC Education Committee, brought together climate scientist Dr. Casey Ivanovich, a postdoctoral climate scientist at the NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies, Maine Forest Service District Forester Shane Duigan, and Lakes Environmental Association Executive Director Colin Holme for a morning of learning, discussion and reflection. The presenters offered information relevant to their areas of expertise, followed by small group discussions and a brief Q & A session. Ivanovich concluded the workshop with suggestions for hopeful action in the face of this climate reality.

“The MSC Education Committee is thankful and pleased with both the day of and follow-up reaction to recent Winter Workshop on Climate Change and Summer Camps,” Education Committee Chair Karen Malm wrote in an email. “Our presenters delivered information that was both digestible and highly relevant to summer camps, making science and statistics related to climate change understandable to lay people while connecting it to camp specific topics such as facilities, health and wellness, trips, plant programs, and more.”

“We are incredibly thankful to our presenters for meeting with the committee before the conference to share their presentation information, which allowed them to know what others were covering, allow them to share more information, and to seamlessly dovetail their presentations. The slides from each of the presenters will soon be available on the Resources page of the MSC website,” Malm wrote.

The Science of Climate Change

Ivanovich began the presentation with a four-part talk addressing physics, the changing climate, lessons from other industries and applications for camps. Among these applications, she said, lies the need for preparation and a commitment to minimize camps’ own impacts on the climate.

“Every camp is different,” Ivanovich said. Therefore, each camp must consider “what climate-related hazards are relevant to you and your area — both now and in the future.” Camps can do that by “identifying key elements of the climate and determining who to engage with to help inform steps to make sure your camp is more resilient and how to reduce contributions,” she said.

Ivanovich, who studies “when and why extreme humid heat events occur,” said ultimately camps must continue to improve their own management plans.



MSC Education Committee in a playful pose following the Winter Workshop and Business Extravaganza. Pictured are: Front row, left to right, Heidi Krieger, Nick Teich, Beigette Gill, Terri Mulks, Laura Jo Cunningham, Becky Alford. Back row, left to right, Karen Malm, Jake Henry-Hill, Carissa Chipman, Catriona Logan Sangster, Clay Miles, and Lisa Tripler.

High heat days continue to increase, she said. For example, Portland has experienced an increase of five such days from 1979 to the present.

Impact of Climate Change on Lakes

Lakes also exhibit effects of climate change, said LEA Executive Director Colin Holme. In Maine, lake temperatures have increased an average of .5°C per decade since the 1980s, he said, adding that ice cover is decreasing, as well.

These changes have several impacts on camps, Holme said. While warmer water is desirable for swimming and other water sports, warm water also generates more algae blooms, which in turn can foster more bacterial growth. A longer boating season can move more invasive species like milfoil around the lake.

Increased precipitation can also affect lakes due to increased runoff, he said. For example, phosphorus in runoff also leads to algae blooms. “Drainage from roads and driveways are the biggest exporter of phosphorus,” he said.

But “camps have a long history of preservation,” Holme said, stating that “adaptation is preparation.” Maine’s high-quality lakes make it easier to preserve water quality, he added.

“The greener the watershed the bluer the lakes,” Holme said, advocating that camps correct perennial erosion sites and consider low impact development “to get water back into the ground.”

Winter Workshop continues on page 8

Winter Workshop *continued from page 7*

Boating can also have negative impacts on water quality, he said. Staying in deeper water reduces the incidence of resuspending sediment, for example. Boats should stay away from weeds and camps should regularly check docks for invasive species growth. Finally, camps can help by supporting the Courtesy Boat Inspector programs active throughout Maine's lakes, Holme said.

Climate Change and Forests

"The intensity and frequency of storms are increasing."

Maine Forest Service District Forester Shane Duigan knows firsthand how those storms are affecting the state's forests. Camp professionals know, too. And while a dead tree in the woods can be left alone, both dead and live trees can be hazards at camp.

Engaging an arborist is a key measure, Duigan told the workshop participants. Arborists can help determine whether trees are healthy and structurally sound and can assist camps in considering the effect of all levels of wind events.

"A big event or accumulated small events can present access issues and an aesthetic/legacy issue," Duigan said.

Camps must also consider the change in fire seasons because of climate change, he said. For example, in 2024 the fire season in Maine extended until Christmas, he said. Fuel management is therefore increasingly important. Like Holme, Duigan also pointed out the dangers of invasive species. Not only do they disrupt ecosystems, invasive species like bittersweet "can choke out the tops of trees."

Camps can address potential problems "by making plans," Duigan said. A forest management plan considers the stakeholders involved as well as forest resilience — "the ability to adapt and recover from disturbance."

Breakout discussions offer across-the-board ideas

From facilities to programming to budget and fundraising, breakout discussions following the presentation gave workshop attendees the opportunity to think about specific concerns and responses to climate change challenges at camp. In addition to the categories above, conversations addressed staff and camp culture, health and safety, and trip and travel.

Wrap-up from Dr. Ivanovich – the value of "collective action"

"We can tackle climate change anxiety through collective action," Ivanovich said in her concluding remarks. It is important to acknowledge the impact of climate change, she said, adding that in addition to grief, "all emotions are acceptable."

The situation then demands action, she said, a diversion of focus "from you to the community."

"Consider the resources at your disposal," she said. Citing the work of Dr. Ayana Elizabeth Johnson, she suggested that action can take place at the intersection of what you are good at, what

Winter Workshop *continues on page 9*



Jim Chalmers of Chalmers Insurance Group, with MSC's Rich Deering

Jim Chalmers Honored with Jack Erler Award

Cited for his knowledge, compassion, empathy and generosity, **Jim Chalmers, Chief Sales Officer of the Chalmers Insurance Group**, received the Jack Erler Award at the 2025 Winter Workshop and Extravaganza held on January 29 in South Portland. The award recognizes outstanding contributions to organized camping as exemplified by attorney Jack Erler's five-decade career. It is presented to individuals, groups or organizations that may or may not be members of Maine Summer Camps in recognition of exceptional support of MSC.

"He wants to understand the culture of your camp," said one camp director, adding that Chalmers seeks "to create the best health and safety practices to protect kids, staff and community."

"He is the one who you trust to help you and to be there and steer you in the right direction," another camp professional added.

A fourth-generation owner of Chalmers Insurance Group, Chalmers is "highly attuned" to camp operations, camp directors say. "For someone who doesn't run a camp, he has a ton of insight into what it takes." Cited as even-keeled and reassuring, "he doesn't get overly upset about anything, he knows his business, and he is there whenever you need."

Chalmers was also singled out for his generosity of time and experience. Chalmers Insurance Group has for years sponsored a wide range of MSC events, including educational workshops, webinars and the Maine social gathering at the ACA, New England, annual conference. These contributions are truly valuable to camp professionals "making the camping industry a better industry — more safe and more effective for kids," said a camp director.

In receiving the award, Chalmers acknowledged his team and thanked MSC. "I feel privileged and honored to support all of you." ■

Winter Workshop *continued from page 8*

brings you joy, and what work needs doing. Climate scientist Katherine Heyhee also has words of wisdom, Ivanovich said: “the most important thing you can do to fight climate change is to talk about it.”

Education Committee’s Gratitude for Program Planning, Sponsorship, and Attendance

Malm expressed gratitude to the MSC community for attending the program, including “braving the Winter Workshop day prerequisite snow to attend the workshop. The breakout groups had spirited sharing of concerns and possible solutions, and we believe many camp professionals went away for the day with the information and tools to implement actionable steps immediately.”

Malm also thanked Lucy, Raine, and Kris for their “outstanding work” in the planning and execution of the Winter Workshop and Business Networking Extravaganza. “We are also grateful to our sponsors for making these events possible.”

“Finally, we acknowledge the immense value of coming together as a community,” said Malm. “The wealth of knowledge and resourcefulness shared reminds us of the immediate positive impact we can have, as well as the broader focus on our campers and the role summer camps play in protecting and enriching their future.” ■

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Mark your calendar! 2025 Upcoming Events

Wednesday, April 9

MYCA Board Virtual Work Session, 10am-12pm

Wednesday, April 9

MSC Board Virtual Meeting, 2-4pm

Thursday, April 10

Nonprofit Circle In-Person Gathering, 10am-1pm,
Camp Mechuwana, Winthrop, No cost; includes lunch

Wednesday, April 16

Virtual Conversation on Supporting Trans* Youth with the
DEI Committee, 12-1pm, focused on the podcast, "Parented:
Raising A Gender-Expansive Kid"

Wednesday, April 30

Supporting Trans & Nonbinary Campers and Staff This Summer
(In-person) 9:30am-12:30pm, Center for Grieving Children,
Portland

Tuesday, July 8

Shockingly Professional Talk: Smooth Responses to Sensitive
Topics (for CITs and young staff) with Chris Thurber, 10am-1pm,
Camp Wawenock, Raymond

Tuesday, July 15

MSC Spelling Bee, 9:30am-12pm, Camp Wigwam, Harrison

Monday - Friday, July 21-25

Junior Maine Guide Testing Encampment, Stephen Phillips
Memorial Preserve, Oquossoc

TBA, September

MYCA/MSV Virtual Annual Meeting

Thursday, September 25

Migis Meetup at Migis Lodge, South Casco, 8:45am-Coffee,
9:30am-1:30pm; includes lunch



[Click here for the Google Calendar Link](#)



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Hiring Fairs, Panel Discussions and Classroom Visits Bring Camps to Campuses

MSC Staffing Spectacular Offered Three Hiring Events in 30 Hours

Nearly three dozen MSC camps participated in a “Staffing Spectacular” held at three universities in early March. In gatherings that included traditional fair formats, classroom visits and panel discussions, students at the University of Maine Farmington, the University of Maine Orono, and Husson University were able to learn about working at camps in a variety of capacities. Similarly, representative camps were able to tout the values of camp employment, including potential internship opportunities.

“Professors were super receptive to the idea...we gave an overall presentation of who we are as an organization and had each camp go over what they were looking for...”

Dave Schiff (Camp Manitou), ad hoc staffing committee chair, called it a “tremendous opportunity for camp staff to get out there in a short amount of time, visit three pretty eager places.”

In addition to holding more traditional hiring fair events at the universities, camp directors were able to make classroom visits to promote camp employment. There was also a panel discussion at Farmington and a networking event at Husson, Schiff said.

Schiff said the key to successful future hiring events is collecting information. “The biggest thing that we can do as a committee is gather as much data from people as possible, drive how we approach future opportunities, and be sure time is well spent visiting campuses,” Schiff said.

A post-event survey provided positive feedback as well as thoughtful suggestions for future planning. Raine Kerhin, MSC executive assistant, was instrumental in working with the ad hoc staffing committee to organize the event.

“I thought it went really well,” Kerhin said. “I had a lot of fun watching our camp professionals light up as they talk about the work they do over the summer.”

“It was great to get in front of students who may not have considered camp for summer employment or internship credit this coming summer,” she said.

Alex Rotman, director of Camp Caribou, was a key player in organizing the Orono event, Rotman employed two UMO students to teach basketball and football in the summer of 2024. They were at the hiring event, he said, and they “vouched for working at summer camp.”

“Professors were super receptive to the idea,” Rotman added. “We gave an overall presentation of who we are as an organization and had each camp go over what they were looking for,” he said. “I met someone and sent out a contract two days later,” he added.

“It is a massive endeavor, and we wanted to make it worthwhile for camp directors who are traveling,” Rotman said. “We wanted it to be a little more unique,” he said.



MSC camp members held a panel discussion for students at the three-day Staffing Spectacular in early March.

Rotman worked closely with the University of Maine Career Office and its Assistant Director of Employer Relations Kate Alexsen Foster.

“We know that summer camps are a wonderful place to develop leadership skills and transferable skills,” Foster said. “There are a variety of needs across majors,” all of which lead to degrees in which “young people are caring about young people.”

Internship Opportunities for Students

Camps are continuing to work with college and university students to create internship opportunities through camp employment.

“It’s one aspect of what’s really important to our committee,” Schiff said. Austin French, the internship coordinator at UMF is helping to “raise awareness” among students, he said.

At Husson University, camps can pursue an approval process to become a designated internship site, Schiff added. “It was only our first real event there,” he said. “There are definitely bigger opportunities” to create internship experiences at camp.

In addition, the Maine Tourism Association has funding to support paid internships for up to three weeks. Last summer, Camp O-AT-KA took the opportunity to bring two certified nursing assistant students to work in the camp’s health center.

Taking Advantage of the MSC Job Board

Schiff also reminds camps to post open positions on the free MSC Job Board, sponsored by A.M. Skier. Those positions— which are not limited to camp counselor jobs— get “more and more visibility,” he said, particularly because they are linked to the Maine Tourism Association board. “We are encouraging everyone to post,” Schiff said.

“It’s great to list generally or more specifically,” he said. “It can be for dining, facilities, health,” in addition to counseling and instructor positions. “It’s going to get a lot of different views.” ■

Fritz Seving, Camp Wildwood, Awarded Speedy Altman Award at CODACON25

In recognition of “wisdom, inspiration and significant contributions to camping and children” the 2025 Speedy Altman Award was awarded by the Camp Owners and Directors Association (CODA) to **Fritz Seving** of Camp Wildwood. Fritz received the award at CODACON25, held in February in Dallas.



The award celebrates those who have made “exceptional impacts on the private camping movement across North America.”

Fritz Seving started his own camp experience at a young age. He has been involved in every facet of camping, from being camper to counselor, CIT, director, owner, and proud parent of a camper. Fritz and his wife Christine owned and operated a successful Maine camp for over three decades. They continued to be involved in its transition until early 2024. Now Fritz and Christine co-own Camp Wildwood in Bridgton with Louis Kail.

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Annual S-p-e-l-l-i-n-g Bee Slated for July 15 at Camp Wigwam

Same Competition, New Location

The annual **MSC Spelling Bee** will take place on Tuesday, July 15 at Camp Wigwam. The bee, founded by Bob Strauss of Camp Wigwam, is now in the hands of Strauss’s successor Neal Goldberg, who will host the event at Camp Wigwam. Note that the event is being held on a Tuesday to avoid conflicts with camps’ traditional Wednesday trip days.

More information will be forthcoming in the Hall Monitor.

Mark your Calendars for Two DEI Programs in April

During the month of April, the MSC DEI Committee will host an in-person gathering focusing on supporting trans and nonbinary campers and staff as well as a virtual conversation on supporting Trans* Youth

In-Person Meetup on April 30 to Address Supporting Trans Campers and Staff

On Wednesday, April 30 from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm MSC members are invited to join the DEI Committee at the Center for Grieving Children in Portland for a program focused on supporting trans and nonbinary campers and staff.

Peter Kassen, co-chair of the MSC DEI Committee, says this topic was one of the most popular of the breakout discussions at the MSC Migis Lodge gathering last fall. Camp professionals raised a full range of questions, he said, including staffing, accommodating campers, and managing challenging situations. "It could have gone on for a couple more hours. There was a lot on people's minds."

"For some people this is sort of uncharted territory," Kassen said. "It requires some thought and education."

"On top of that, people who are trans are now being mistreated in this society," he said. "There is an expectation that staff, parents, campers are that much more in need of support and recognition

because they may be having some negative experiences outside of camp. We want to create those positive experiences."

The program will include presentations by Nick Teich, PhD, LCSW, of Fairwinds Camp Consulting, and Cassie Cooper, Associate Director of OUT Maine. Teich has broad experience consulting with camp professionals on a myriad of issues, while Cooper works in "building a welcoming and affirming community for Maine's LGBTQ+ youth," Kassen said.

Briefly, the program will address the following:

WHY: Many of us have encountered challenges as we include nonbinary and trans campers and staff and this is an opportunity to meet in person, learn from one another and brainstorm. We're looking to address the specific needs of this moment in time and respond to the current needs of the trans/nonbinary community in our camps.

WHAT: Short speaker presentations, panel discussion including camp director, camp family, and staff. Breakout room discussions grouped by current practices.

WHO: Open to camps curious about expanding their gender inclusion practices/policies, camps looking to bolster their support of their existing queer campers/staff, and camps not sure.

Kassen praised the DEI Committee for its efforts planning the program. "Everybody's pitched in in terms of locating the site, tracking down speakers and panelists. It's been a really good group effort. We are looking forward to it because it's in person, that setting is beautiful; I think it will be great," he said.



[Click here to register for the in-person April 30 program](#)

April 16 Virtual Conversation 12–1pm

Can't make it to the in-person event? Come to our VIRTUAL conversation on Supporting Trans* Campers using the podcast, "Parented: Raising A Gender-Expansive Kid", as launching off point.

ALL who are interested in the topic of trans inclusion are welcome to attend. Listening to the podcast beforehand is optional. Join us for a casual conversation about impressions and takeaways from this episode! In this podcast, three parents of gender-expansive kids discuss learning to support and advocate for their children. The parents, and one of their kids, share what it's looked like for them to push back on the gender binaries present everywhere: from doctor's offices to summer camps and schools.



[Click here to access the podcast](#)



[Click here to register for the April 16 Zoom](#)

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Two Maine Professionals Honored with ACA National Awards

Laura Blaisdell, MD, MPH, FAAP National Service Award

An ACA National Service Award, designed to recognize continued and increasing service to ACA at the national level, was awarded in February to Laura Blaisdell, MD, MPH, FAAP.



Laura is a pediatrician, camp physician, researcher and advocate. For 20 years, she has worked in camp medicine, serving as Medical Director at Camp Winnebago.

She currently serves as the chief medical officer at SeriousFun Children's Network, practices at the Pediatric Clinic at Maine Medical Center (MMC), is the immediate-past president of Maine AAP and a founding member of Maine Families for Vaccines. Laura researches parental vaccine hesitation and is an Assistant Professor at Tufts University School of Medicine. She also serves as site director for the National Children's Study, as Chair of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at MMC, as chief of pediatrics at InterMed, and as a trustee to Mercy Hospital in Portland.

Laura has been an invited lecturer and panelist in multiple forums on many topics, including the use of social media in research, vaccine hesitation and policy, camping and infection diseases, and the effectiveness of public health interventions in the camp setting.

In 2020, Laura began advising camps in preparation for safe operations in the post-COVID world. She has published research on managing H1N1 and COVID-19 in the camp setting and has served as an expert panelist in the creation of the Field Operation Guide for the ACA and the Y-CAMPs of the United States. She has also served as a public health consultant to state camp organizations, independently owned camps and public and independent schools. She serves as a medical advisor to the American Camp Association (ACA) and the Alliance for Camp Health (ACH). Laura lives in South Portland with her husband, Andy Lilienthal (Camp Winnebago), and two sons.

Greg Shute of Chewonki Foundation Special Recognition Award

Recently retired after at 41 years at the Chewonki Foundation, Greg Shute was named a recipient of an ACA Special Recognition Award, designed to honor groups, organizations, or individuals for their efforts to promote camp on a national level.



Greg spent much of his Chewonki career as the Outdoor Programs Director. His role, where he rose to the position of senior vice president, included not only overseeing staff training, risk management, and program development but also oversight of Chewonki's coastal island and north woods properties.

Greg is a Registered Maine Guide and founding member and past president of the Maine Wilderness Guides Organization. For 25 years, Greg was a member of the State of Maine Youth Camp Trip Leader Committee and was chairperson of the Committee for 20 years. He received the Maine Youth Camping Foundation, Halsey Gulick Award for distinguished service to organized youth camping in Maine.

During his career, Greg has trained hundreds of Chewonki trip leaders and until his retirement he continued to guide remote canoe trips in Maine, Labrador, and Nunavut. He lives in Alna, Maine, on the Sheepscot River with his wife, Lynne. They have a grown son, Kyle. ■

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Semi-Annual MYCA/MSC Meeting Held March 20

MYCA President Laura Ordway welcomed more than 60 attendees at the semi-annual meeting last month. After approving the minutes of the MYCA Annual Meeting and a brief Treasurer’s report by Steve Sudduth (Wyonegonic Camps), Laura provided a report regarding the rulemaking status of the new Chapter 208 rule, the Hall of Flags event at the Maine State House, and other relevant legislative issues (which will be tracked in the Hall Monitor). Government Relations and Lobbying attorney Newell Augur then offered a brief legislative update. The MYCA portion of the meeting then adjourned.

MSC Vice-President Terri Mulks then welcomed participants, followed by approval of Annual Meeting minutes, Treasurer’s report (Fritz Seving, Camp Wildwood), and Lucy Norvell’s Executive Director’s report. Following committee reports, MSC members voted to amend the MSC by-laws to state that non-voting board members “serve at the pleasure of the board.” A brief Q & A followed.

Visit our MSC Resources page for the link to the meeting recording. If you need the password, please email Lucy at camps@mainecamps.org ■



Click here to access the MSC Resources page



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 with the
OUTDOORS
 in MIND

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Resources Compiled for Your Convenience

MSC has a long history of providing and aggregating resources exclusively for Member Camps. As camps gear up for HIP inspections this coming summer using the Chapter 208 Rule that is currently being promulgated, we are going to share more resources than we typically do.

We will use two major formats to share information. The first is our website. The image included here is of the homepage. Hover over CAMPS and a menu drops down, including three primary resource pages. The one named Resources is filled with documents, memos, videos, and information that MSC has provided, developed, commissioned, or sourced. Many of these are password protected. Email Lucy for the password. Some are old, which is why they are archived. Our staff team

at MSC is working hard to ensure that only the most current resources are linked for your use. If you discover resources that are outdated, or if you need additional resources, please let us know right away. The page named Maine State Resources is full of links to State of Maine resources including the version of the Chapter 208 Rule we are following until the brand new one is ready. If you discover broken links or any other issues, please let us know. The third resource page developed especially for our members is Indigenous Peoples: Understanding and Resources. This is the most recent. The other two resource pages are being heavily edited so camp members can access the most current information all in one place without re-exploring old Hall Monitors that may have included links. Some of the links found in the Hall Monitor can also be accessed on the Resource pages.

We are also using live Google Documents to share specific information. These don't lend themselves to password protection. Rather, once you get the link to this type of document in the Hall Monitor, a newsletter, or via email, you can bookmark it and refer back to it when it is populated. A good example of this kind of document is our Certification and Training document that is continually updated throughout the spring with details submitted by training organizers on this form. You will not find these documents on the resource pages.

Please reach out to Lucy to share how we can better put the information you most need at your fingertips. ■



[Click here for the Certification and Trainings Document](#)

Camp Pros Are in the Relationship Biz

Let the New Mentoring Relationships Begin!

MSC is launching a new **Mentoring Program**, which grew out of discussion among the members of our Nonprofit Circle. Mike Douglass of Camp Bishopswood and Peter Kassen and his wife, Meg, whose long tenure as co-owners and directors of Hidden Valley Camp ended with the summer of 2024, all spent time collaborating on and designing the process for MSC Members who would like to have or to be a mentor to get matched up. Please check out the links below and sign up to Become a Mentor or a Mentee — or both!



[Click here to read about the process and guidelines](#)



[Click here to sign up to become a MSC Mentor](#)



[Click here to sign up to become a MSC Mentee](#)



Mike Douglass (Camp Bishopswood) right, with two participants in the Level Ground program.



Peter and Meg Kassen will join Mike Douglass in spearheading a new MSC mentoring program.