

Leading with Confidence: Managing Emotions, Behaviors, and Well-Being in Today's Camp Environment

Winter Workshop slated for February 4, 2026

Experts in the field **Nick Teich** and **Emily Golinsky** (see bios on p. 4) are teaming up on **February 4 at the annual Winter Workshop** to help Maine camp directors and leaders get ahead of the emotional, behavioral, and mental-health curveballs that inevitably show up at camp from campers and staff. If you've ever heard *"This doesn't feel safe for me," "I need a mental health break," "They're having a panic attack,"* or the summertime classic, *"This wasn't on any of their camper information forms,"* then this session will meet you exactly where you are.

With the recognition and understanding that each camp is unique, Emily and Nick's goal is to help you lead with confidence while reducing stress and building a culture that can actually withstand the emotional load of a real summer season at your specific program. After this interactive workshop, you'll have

practical, implementable tools to strengthen your systems, support your people, and handle both everyday challenges and the bigger, messier moments that require a steady hand.

Following the main session, we'll move into smaller breakout conversations, each focusing on a topic related to the session's central themes, including: pre-, during-, and post-incident planning; evaluating your camp's risk tolerance; defining camper eligibility; and more.

If current socio-emotional buzzwords like "burned out," "feeling unsafe," "triggered," and more have you and your staff wondering how best to respond, you won't want to miss this event!

Thank you to **Tavezio** for its Winter Workshop sponsorship.

Winter Workshop continues on page 4

MSC Annual Business Networking Extravaganza

Following the Winter Workshop, visit dozens of exhibitors, take a chance on generous raffle offerings

The 2026 Maine Summer Camps Business Networking Extravaganza (BNE) will take place February 4 at the DoubleTree by Hilton Portland in South Portland, convenient to routes I-95, 295, and 114 and a free shuttle ride from the Portland International JetPort.

The BNE will begin officially at 12:15pm. Drawings of raffle prize winners for the many generous offerings donated by Business Members begin at 2:45pm and the Grand Prize Raffle winner will be revealed just before the event's conclusion at 3pm.

Business Networking Extravaganza schedule:

- 10:30am Exhibitor Set-up
- 11:15am Exhibitor Lunch
- 12:15pm Lunch for camp pros available
- 12:15pm Business Networking Extravaganza begins
- 2:45pm Raffle Winners announced

"It takes millions of dollars for supplies and services for over 140 Maine camps to take care of more than 60,000 kids each summer. The MSC Business Networking Extravaganza is the ideal event to make so much of this happen," said Arleen Shepherd, Director of Camp Skylemar and MSC Business Development Committee Chair.

Businesses gave rave reviews about last year's event, and 2026 will be better than ever, Shepherd says. "We expect well over 100 camp professionals to attend, who are eager to do business with participating businesses."

"These are the businesses I will support as well. Speaking with businesses face-to-face helps solidify my relationships. Plus, there will be plenty of vendors who are new to me. In the past, I have ended up buying from those who I never would have known about otherwise," she said.

Business Networking Extravaganza continues on page 4

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207.518.9557
PO Box 1861, Portland, Maine 04104

MESSAGE FROM THE MSC PRESIDENT

DECEMBER 2025

Greetings to all! I hope this message finds you well as we navigate the transition into the darker days of the year. While the seasonal shift can sometimes feel isolating, I try and look at this time as a positive countdown bringing us closer to the Summer of 2026! Although I annually contemplate moving to Arizona or the Virgin Islands where Daylight Savings Time is not a thing, I've learned to find the light in these short winter days by cozying up with some mint hot chocolate and planning for the forthcoming year.



Perhaps the brightest light right now is that Conference Season is almost upon us! As camp pros, we know the importance of community and professional development, especially during the off-season. If you haven't yet, I encourage you to carve out time to attend at least one event in the early months of 2026. I find that traditional education sessions can be motivating and that the true value of these gatherings lies in the connections that foster warmth and inspiration. Even a single session or hallway conversation can spark an idea that validates your approach, strengthens your convictions, or opens your mind to something completely new and different.

There are unlimited possibilities to participate in learning and networking in the New Year. Not only does MSC have the Annual Winter Workshop coming up in February but also a new monthly Casual Conversations calendar that kicked off in November. Based on feedback from the semi-annual meeting, we are excited to be adding more membership touch points beginning with these Casual Conversations. Monthly topics and moderators will vary and provide time for sharing and Q & A. ACA also has a robust calendar of in-person opportunities that literally stretch from coast to coast: the warmth of San Diego (National), the energy of Atlantic City (Tri-State), and the downhome feel of Manchester (New England). The Hall Monitor is your guide for information, registration, and links.

As we wait patiently for full-time sunshine, I look forward to seeing you at one of these events and wish you the ability to find a little bit of light in every day (believe me, the mint hot chocolate helps). I also want to thank you for all that you do to keep the Maine camp community thriving no matter what the season.

Happy Holidays

Terri Mulks
Director, Camp Susan Curtis
President MSC

MYCA UPDATE

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

In response to the Camp Mystic tragedy this past summer, the Texas legislature passed emergency House Bill 1 (Youth Camper Act) and Senate Bill 1 (Heaven's 27 Camp Safety Act) mandating stricter regulations for TX youth camps' emergency preparedness, staff training, communications and inspections. The draft of the newly proposed rule was released this week, with formal adoption expected to take place early in 2026. Several other states have proposed camper safety legislation, also in response to the tragedy. At this time, no legislation specifically related to camper safety has been submitted for Maine's second session of the 132nd legislature, which will reconvene in January.



Maine licensed youth camps have been regulated since 1974 through the Maine Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). Our rule, commonly known as the "Youth Camps Rule" or "Chapter 208", was recently updated after an 18-month stakeholder process involving DHHS, MYCA and individual camps. The rule was promulgated in May 2025, and camps were inspected by the Health Inspector Program (HIP) this past summer under this newly updated rule. **Section 13. A. and B.** (pg. 40) list the requirements for licensed youth camps in Maine regarding risk management and emergency procedures in the event of a disaster:

SECTION 13. SAFETY PLANS AND DISASTER PREVENTION

A. Administration of Disaster Safety Plans, Drills and Protocols.

- 1. The operator must have an emergency plan in place that addresses communication protocol and response to possible disasters, such as fire, weather, and other potentially life-threatening events, such as injured or missing campers or intruders or trespassers at the camp. Critical*
- 2. Emergency communication protocols must specify an appropriate mode of communication for the situation or event and locale, and address coordination between trained responders, camp staff and affected individuals. Critical*
- 3. Emergency response protocols must include active shooter emergency response protocols. Critical*
- 4. The operator or designee must instruct campers and staff in these procedures and must conduct and document at least one drill during each camp session. The type of drill is determined by the camp director or designee. Critical*

B. Emergency Disaster Prevention Plans

- 1. The operator or designee must maintain a copy of this emergency/disaster prevention plan at the camp office. Critical*
- 2. The written policy must direct that each camper may only be released from camp into the custody of a designated person,*

previously identified in writing, who may include the camper's parent, guardian, or other person(s) specifically identified by the parent or guardian. Critical

As mentioned in the previous MSC NEWS, MYCA is busy preparing membership resources and/or webinars for important topics:

- When is an **Eating & Lodging license** needed for your camp?
- What is a camp **immunization policy** and when should parents access it?
- What should you do when your camp has a **bat-in-a-cabin/building incident**?
- Maine Board of Nursing rulemaking for **Unlicensed Assistive Personnel (UAP)** clarifying medication administration at camp

MYCA Governmental Affairs attorney, Newell Augur, continues to monitor labor bills in Augusta which were carried over to the 2026 legislative session and may affect youth camps, including:

- LD 54: An Act to Require Employers to Disclose Pay Ranges and Maintain Records of Employees' Pay Histories
- LD 60: An Act to Allow Employees to Request Flexible Work Schedules
- LD 599: An Act to Raise the Salary Threshold for Overtime Pay
- LD 799: An Act to Report Gender Wage Gaps
- LD 61: An Act to Regulate Employer Surveillance to Protect Workers

MYCA will continue to follow these bills and will update membership.

Laura Ordway, Winona Camps
President MYCA Board
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.

Business Networking Extravaganza continued from page 1

Shepherd calls the event “a win” for both businesses and camps. “For businesses...where else are you guaranteed the opportunity of meeting so many targeted customers in a three-hour window? For camp directors...these are the vendors who care about our industry, so let's care about them too! You get to see the products and personally hear about services as well as standards of business.”

Registration is open for Business Members. The snow date for the event is Thursday, Feb. 5.



Business Members: click here to register

Thank you to our Business Member Sponsors!



Winter Workshop continued from page 1

Winter Workshop schedule:

| | |
|-------------|-----------------------------------------|
| 8:30-9am | Coffee |
| 9am-12:15pm | Winter Workshop |
| 12:15pm | Camp pro lunch available |
| 12:15 pm | Business Networking Extravaganza begins |
| 2:45pm | Raffle winners announced |

The Winter Workshop will be held at the Doubletree Hilton Portland in South Portland. Watch the Hall Monitor for more information! The snow date for the event is Thursday, Feb. 5.



Click here to register for the Winter Workshop

WINTER WORKSHOP PRESENTERS

Emily Golinsky is an international keynote speaker and presenter whose sessions get called many things, some of her favorites being: “tremendously helpful,” and “not to be missed – a reason to come to the conference!” With 25+ years of experience in camp leadership, including 15 years as Executive Director at the therapeutically-based Camp Starfish (NH), Emily founded Bright Moose, LLC (www.brightmoosetraining.com) to provide training, coaching, consultation, and professional development to camps, schools, towns, and youth organizations, guided by the motto “Help Others Shine Bright!” An Education Advocate for youth with special needs and a certified Mental Health First Aid Instructor, Emily is a recipient of the Peter Kerns Award for the Advancement of Professional Development. She holds a BS (Health Psychology) and MS (Camp Administration & Leadership), and recently completed her Higher Education Teaching Certificate through Harvard. She is President of the New Hampshire state association for camps and an accreditation visitor and Board Stewardship committee member for ACA, New England. You can find her in *Camping Magazine*, *ParentingNH*, on the Project Real Job blog, and on multiple podcasts. Fair warning: she is a member of the National Sarcasm Society and a collector of terribly awesome puns.



Dr. Nick Teich is the owner of Fairwinds Camp Consulting, where he specializes in executive coaching for camp directors as well as helping camps with the business aspects of their operations. He is a social worker by training and enjoys bringing mental and emotional health expertise into camps. Nick has worked in the camp industry since 2000, and was a longtime Maine camper before that. He is the founder and now the director emeritus of an overnight camp in New Hampshire, and also founded a small family camp in Maine. Nick is on the Board of Directors for ACA New England and an active member of Maine Summer Camps. He lives in the Boston area with his wife and two children.



MSC Casual Conversations Now Held Monthly

Watch the Hall Monitor for more details

Maine Summer Camps has offered Casual Conversations on a variety of important topics in the last few years. One of the most well attended was a conversation on having difficult conversations during staff training in preparation for summer. We have learned over time that casual conversations resonate as they are less structured than a workshop or webinar, yet more structured than some of the informal roundtables and groups that camp pros independently participate in by choice and/or by invitation with peer camps, cohorts and the like.

The point of offering MSC's Casual Conversations is to keep it casual and conversational with a relatively open agenda — all while providing opportunities to listen to differing points of view, to identify relevant best practices, to gather pro tips, and to converse with camp pros who may not be in your regular orbit.

We have decided to host Casual Conversations more frequently and on a regular basis — roughly once a month. They could

happen more frequently, depending on how and why topics are identified. As the calendars of camp pros are super crowded, it will take a minute to identify the regular day of the month and the best time of day for this new, regular offering. In the meantime, we will experiment!

We have held two Casual Conversations at this point: November's on **DEI Challenges and Successes** from Summer 2024, hosted by the DEI Committee on a Monday afternoon and December's **Everything Needs to Happen Earlier: International staffing best practices for camps this winter**. This was facilitated on a Wednesday morning by Staffing Committee Chair Dave Schiff and Lucy and joined by several Business Members operating in the International Staffing space.

January's Casual Conversation will be on the theme of our Indigenous Neighbors. And, the Education Committee has claimed the February date. Stand by for the dates, which will be announced shortly in the Hall Monitor.

We welcome your suggestions for future topics. Please email them to Lucy at camps@mainecamps.org. ■

Upcoming Webinar

Emergency Preparedness at Camp - A Panel Discussion

Monday, January 12, 2026
1:00 PM - 2:00 PM EST



Emergency action planning has become a critical focus across the camp community following the devastating flooding in Texas this past summer.

This session brings professionals together to share real-life experiences and explore why strong culture matters as much as solid policies. Our panel will offer practical resources and actionable steps to help you prepare before, during, and after a crisis—whether you're refining a plan or starting from scratch.

Register Here

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*There is no question that Maine camp professionals utilize a vast quantity of talents and skills in their work serving youngsters attending camp across the state. But many of these same professionals share their abilities in other settings as well. In each upcoming newsletter, MSC will feature camp pros who are investing their time in projects outside camp. This issue we profile Fernwood Cove's **Beigette Gill**, who serves as an advisor for the Olympia Snow Women's Leadership Institute.*



Beigette Gill: Sharing her Passion and Expertise in the Olympia Snow Women's Leadership Institute

Beigette Gill certainly knows about girls and their journeys. Fernwood Cove, the camp in Harrison that Beigette owns and directs with her husband, Jim, provides hundreds of girls each summer with the opportunity for connection, challenge and personal growth. Now Beigette is also sharing her passion for and commitment to high school girls' development by guiding participants in the Olympia Snow Women's Leadership Institute.

The Institute, serving high school girls since 2015, was founded by former Maine Senator Olympia Snowe "to raise the confidence and aspirations of high school girls by helping them develop the skills needed to be leaders in their lives, families, careers, and communities." This mission statement is complemented by the program's vision to be a national model for enabling high school girls to "recognize their gifts" and become future leaders. The leadership institute program is divided into three themes. In tenth grade the girls explore "My Values," followed by "My Voice" in 11th grade and "My Vision" in their senior year.

It's right up Beigette's alley.

Along with a "Co-OLA" (Olympia Leader Advisor), Beigette began working with a group of high sophomores during the 2024-25 academic year at Mountain Valley High School in Rumford. The co-advisors meet monthly with the same six girls and will follow them through their senior year.

Beigette's involvement was spurred by happenstance about five years ago, she says. "My car was getting repaired at Moody's in Auburn and on the coffee table was a newsletter about Olympia Snowe's Women's Leadership Institute. I picked it up and what stood out was the core curriculum of the program." The three themes of the program "were so well put together," Beigette said.

"How integral I thought that would be for the girls who are in high school and figuring life out and what direction to go and who they are."

At that time, Beigette says, she didn't have the time to dedicate to the program but "years later, I looked more seriously."

At its outset, the program served 45 girls in seven schools serving Androscoggin County. Today, the Institute's website states, nearly 600 girls in 38 schools — across all of Maine's 16 counties — participate in the program.

Beigette says her camp work and her role as an OLA have a reciprocal relationship, "which I love." Her vast skillset facilitating conversations among groups of different sizes comes into play, as does her expertise teaching smaller groups in activities at camp.

"I feel like all of those experiences help me be present and bring listening skills to the table," she said.

Beigette says that the curriculum, which has been in use for nearly 11 years, is "very well developed." Each month the OLAs receive a facilitated guide, and Beigette meets with her Co-OLA to decide what sections each will handle. "They also provide a Zoom prior to the monthly meeting to go over the curriculum."

The OLAs include women from various career paths as well as women who have retired, Beigette says. Teachers nominate students, known as "OLs," who they believe will both benefit from and add to the program, she says. Students make a three-year commitment to the program and can earn both academic badges and university credit.

At the leadership institute's annual Fall Forum, which was held in Bangor this fall (on the same day as the Migis Meet-Up!), all the OLs in the program gathered with OLAs for an event that "spearheads the year ahead." It included conversations about careers, networking, and navigating job searches, including the opportunity to practice interviewing techniques, Beigette says.

"What I love about it is it's truly working on introspective skills," Beigette said.

"It's a gift [to OLs] to explore themselves, recognize that people are there to support them, and have an institute to be connected to," Beigette says. "Once an Olympia Leader always an Olympia Leader."

And it's a gift to six of those OLs to work with Beigette Gill. ■

Maine Camp History

Maine Summer Camps Support the War Effort: 1942

By Henry Paul Johnson, Maine Summer Camp Historian

According to a newsletter article published by **Camp Wohelo** in 1942:

“All the camps of Maine are co-operating to raise money for the Red Cross. The total amount raised will be sent to the Treasurer of the Maine Camp Directors’ Association in a lump sum at the end of the summer.”

As further stated in the article published by Camp Wohelo in 1942:

“We have high hopes in regard to the amount we will be able to raise. Each camp will try to do its part to help this worthwhile co-operative venture. Through the Red Cross Life Saving Program, the camps have been assisted for many years.”

In the context of this Camp Wohelo article, Maine Summer Camps have been grateful to the Red Cross for assisting in water safety and lifesaving programs. Raising money for the war effort gave Maine Summer Camps an opportunity to give back.

The efforts to raise money came in many forms. These forms included projects relating to farming as well as areas in

entertainment such as plays, dance recitals, and musicals in which the general public was provided the opportunity to pay an admission fee. It was even proposed during that time that the Sebago Wohelo girls assist a “Ferry Command” to call for parents by boat at nearby resorts as they may have difficulty in reaching camp due to the tire shortage during the war.

During the time of World War II, Camp Wohelo had been operational for some 35 years. Wohelo Camps were founded in 1907 by Charlotte Vetter Gulick and her husband Dr. Luther Halsey Gulick. Both Dr. Gulick and Charlotte believed that girls should be afforded the same or similar physical opportunities as boys and it was in 1907 when they purchased property on Sebago Lake where Camp Wohelo was founded. It is noteworthy that in 1908, the Gulicks developed camp fire for girls now known as “Camp Fire for Girls”.

The tradition of Maine Camps assisting in global efforts, this historian would suggest, is generational. As stated in the Camp Wohelo newsletter in 1942:

“There is a tradition and the campers of this generation have a chance to prove that they are just as capable and original as their parents.”

The spirit of giving and giving back is embedded in the Maine Camp tradition. ■



This article is written by noted author and Maine Summer Camp Historian, Henry Johnson, who attended Camp Powhatan in Otisfield, Maine from 1966 through 1979 as a camper, counselor, and, ultimately, program director. Mr. Johnson is the author of numerous articles and publications relating to the history of Maine summer camps. If you wish to submit information to Mr. Johnson relating to the history of any Maine summer camp, you may do so at the following email: hjohnson@henryjohnsonlaw.com.

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The MSC Book Group is Back!

We're excited to dive into ***Strong Ground*** by Brené Brown and would love for you to join us. Plenty of time to grab a copy from your local library or bookstore and get ready for a morning of thoughtful discussion, great company, and plenty of laughs.

When: Tuesday, January 13, 2026, at 9:15 AM

Where: In-person (coffee, goodies, and connection!) with a Zoom option for those who can't make it in person. Location—MSC office in Portland (550 Forest Ave. Suite 203) Mark your calendars—you won't want to miss it!

Email to attend in person. **Click here** to register for the Zoom.

Join the Summit to Shore Career Fest on Feb. 11 in Farmington

MSC a Benefactor Sponsor of Annual UMF Hiring Event

Camp hiring season is upon us, and once again, the University of Maine Farmington will host a hiring event spotlighting staffing opportunities at MSC camps and other outdoor recreation employers. Scheduled for Wednesday, February 11 at the UMF campus, the event will include classroom visits, a panel discussion, and time to network in the North Dining Hall.

The event is almost a month earlier than it was last year. MSC Staffing Committee Chair Dave Schiff of Camp Manitou says that decision was based on feedback received after the 2025 hiring event.

"The earlier we can do it in the winter the better," he said. The timing benefits camps still actively hiring as well as motivated students on campus seeking internships, seasonal, and permanent employment.

The event will prioritize opportunities for camp personnel to visit classes, as well as one-on-one networking opportunities. Austin French, UMF Director of Career Pathways & Employer Engagement, said "rather than a more traditional hiring event with tables [hosted by camps], we are trying to turn it way more into a casual networking type event."

French says the campus North Dining Hall will be set up to offer interactive opportunities, high tables to chat at, as well as camp tables around the perimeter of the room. In addition, UMF will host a career panel prior to the networking event, and "tactical class visits" will enable camp professionals to visit students in their learning environments.

"We hope UMF can serve as a hub for employers, students, and community members," French said.

Schiff praised UMF for its role in maximizing hiring opportunities.

"Only so many universities are interested in partnering in such a specific way," he said. "UMF is a really receptive community." Among UMF's qualities, he said, is its commitment to providing internship opportunities. In addition, because French also serves as project director for the university's Outdoor Recreation Hub of

Excellence, outdoor recreation students can gain exposure to long-term work experience in the camping industry as well as in other outdoor recreation fields, Schiff said.

"It's helpful to have a partner really supportive of the work we are doing," Schiff said.

Schiff said UMF professors' interest in highlighting camp employment to their students during class time is a "big, important component of what we are doing."

"When a professor is willing to say to students, '[camp employment] is going to give you a meaningful experience,' that's the best endorsement. ■

Registration Details

Wed., February 11, 2026 (Snow Date: Wed. Feb 25, 2026)

Olsen Student Center at the University of Maine at Farmington

Class Visits: 8am- 5pm

Careers in Outdoor Rec and Tourism Panel: 11am-12pm

Networking Event: 12:30pm-2pm

Registration fees: \$100 for nonprofit organizations and \$150 for all others.

The fee includes attendance at all of the day's events and inclusion in publicity information. Sponsorship opportunities are also available.

For questions or assistance with the registration form, please contact Cyndi McShane at 207-778-7035 or at cynthia.mcshane@maine.edu.



[Click here to register your organization for the event.](#)



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MSC Mentoring Project Moving Forward

Directing a camp comes with its own unique set of rewards — and challenges. For new camp directors facing such challenges, the support of more seasoned professionals can be invaluable.

When Mike Douglass began directing Camp Bishopswood more than a dozen years ago, he says, “I remember that I randomly sat down with Cat (Sangster) and Peter (Kassen) at the networking extravaganza and I thought to myself, oh my gosh, they are so good at what they do. I always thought ‘wouldn’t it be great to have something to help new directors — or old directors — learn new things?’”

Today, Douglass, along with former longtime Hidden Valley Camp directors Peter and Meg Kassen, are spearheading a Maine Summer Camps mentorship project designed to do just that.

“I see it as something that could be a really beneficial value-added thing” for new camp members joining MSC, to say we have this,” Douglass said.

Although the project is in its very earliest stages, Douglass is optimistic about its potential. “Knowing MSC, my guess is if there were a bunch of mentees who really wanted to have this mentor relationship, Maine camp directors would step up.”



Peter Kassen, left, and Mike Douglass are spearheading a MSC mentoring project, matching experienced camp professionals with those new to directing camps.

The partnerships between mentors and mentees will take into consideration what arrangements work best for the two parties, Douglass says. “It was Peter and Meg’s idea trying to not only match up but match up so that it works for both of them,” he said.

Peter Kassen credits Douglass for initiating the idea. “He contacted Lucy and Meg and me and we put together a few things,” Kassen said. “Sort of an introduction for mentors and mentees.”

Kassen says the wisdom of colleagues is always useful. “I know when I was a director for 20 or 30 years it was good to have someone to talk to. We old-timers made use of the wisdom of our friends and colleagues.” The same can be true of those “just getting started,” he said. “It just seems like a great opportunity for everybody.”

When Jessica Paquette took the position of executive director of West End House Camp, she had camp experience from working outside of Maine. “I had just started as executive director and I needed some veteran help,” she said. Working with Douglass and Peter Kassen as mentors “was very helpful.”

“I think camp professionals can be so supportive to other camp professionals,” she said. When you begin collaborating with a mentor, she said, “you have that confidence that the mentor is here to mentor me.”

“There’s no ego involved,” she said. “You can ask whatever you need to ask.”

She recommends the program to others. “There are so many things that are different in the camp industry from any other,” she said. Having a mentor to “walk you through and get to the heart of what camp is after 20 or 30 or 40 years in the Maine camp industry is really helpful to a newbie.”

As the project launches, MSC is looking for more mentors as well as mentees. Anyone who is interested in benefiting from a mentor relationship may reach out to Lucy at camps@mainecamps.org for more information. ■

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Equinox Guiding Service offers professional and inspiring rock climbing and outdoor adventure programs throughout Camden, Acadia, and the Midcoast region of Maine. As an AMGA-accredited guide service, Equinox provides high-quality instruction led by certified climbing guides who specialize in creating fun, confidence-building experiences for youth of all ages. Equinox partners with summer camps, youth programs, and schools across the state to offer half-day, full-day, multi-day, and specialty climbing experiences. Whether scaling beginner-friendly cliffs in Camden Hills or exploring unique rock features along Maine's coast, we prioritize safety, education, and unforgettable adventure.

equinoxguidingservice.com
admin@equinoxguidingservice.com
(207) 619-3957

► BOWLINE HQ

Bowline HQ is a passionate team of modern finance professionals empowering camp leaders with actionable insights. We're 100% camp-focused with a deep understanding of camp operations and your unique needs.

bowlinehq.com
ops@bowlinehq.com
(205) 997-7533

► UNITED STUDIES, INC

As an official U.S. Department of State BridgeUSA program, the United Studies Camp Program specializes in connecting energetic international participants with summer camps across the United States. We facilitate meaningful cultural exchange through our Camp Counselor and Support Staff placements. At United Studies, we pride ourselves on building deep personal relationships with our camps, exchange visitors, and international partners to foster thriving, long-term connections.

unitedstudies.org/
cc@unitedstudies.org
(501) 321-2000

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lelandfaulkner.com
faulknerfilm@gmail.com
(207) 477-3159

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sunsportsmaine.com
info@sunsportsmaine.com
(207) 693-3867

► THREE RIVERS WHITEWATER

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threeriverswhitewater.com/
lindsay@threeriversfun.com
(207) 663-2104

New Business Members continues on page 11

► MAINE LIMOUSINE SERVICE

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mainelimo.com
Info@Mainelimo.com
(207) 883-0222

► GREENHEART EXCHANGE

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A Busy December for Community Connections Group

Join them on December 15 for the Holiday Hang in Bridgton

Members of the MSC Community Connections group once brought their spirit of volunteerism to the Center for Grieving Children in Portland on December 5. A handful of camp professionals spent the afternoon helping to hand-address year-end appeal envelopes and make phone calls following up on the Center's "Markathon" pledge drive.

"We are happy to continue volunteering for them, recognizing the impact they have on children and families during difficult times," said Community Connections Co-chair Carissa Chipman of Chalmers Insurance.

And December brings more fun and camaraderie for the group when it gathers for the second consecutive year for its Holiday Hang. Once again, Community Connections will meet in Bridgton on December 15 with ACA, New England's EPIC (Emerging Professionals in Camping) group for a "Coffee and Camp Chat - Live". Chipman says the event, once again at the Queen's Head, will bring together camp pro's for socializing and conversation on topics such as staffing, enrollment, programming, inclusion and "all that good stuff."

The event, scheduled from 11am to about 2:30pm, will include discussion of challenges and solutions, as well as innovation at camp.

Last year's event drew representatives from about a half dozen Maine Camps. "We had a great turnout," Chipman said. "It was great to see new faces that were both new to Community Connections and who we didn't even know lived in Maine year-round."

"We hope for even more this year," she said.

"We focus so much on building summer community. It's important to continue to surround ourselves throughout year, expanding the circle to other folks that work in camps," Chipman said. "We learn from each other, support each other, and always have fun."

Community Connections is already looking ahead to the new year. Stay tuned for ways to connect with other camp professionals in 2026 at meet-ups, dog walks, and a Sea Dogs game!

If you have ideas or want to learn more, reach out to Rory O'Connor (Kamp Kohut) or Carissa. ■



Click here to register for the December 15 Holiday Hang

to do list:

- ☐ order uniforms
- ☐ design new tee
- ☐ research new items
- ☐ decide on staff gift
- ☐ ecommerce?!
- ☒ call Brio
- ☒ Relax

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2025–2026 Upcoming Events

BOARD MEETINGS (Virtual unless otherwise noted)

Wednesday, January 14, 2026, 10am-noon — MYCA Board

Thursday, February 5, 10am-noon MSC Board, DoubleTree by Hilton Portland, South Portland. (HYBRID)
[Snow date: Friday, February 6 – same time and location]

Wednesday, February 11, 10am-noon — MYCA Work Session

Wednesday, March 11, 10am-noon — MYCA Board

Wednesday, April 8, 10am-noon — MYCA Work Session

Wednesday, April 29, 10am-noon — MSC Board

Wednesday, May 13, 10am-noon — MYCA Board

MSC EVENTS & MEETINGS

Monday, December 15, 11am – 2:30-or-so pm, MSC Community Connections Holiday Hang/Coffee & Camp Chat Live with EPIC, In-Person at Queen's Head Pub, Bridgton

Tuesday, January 13, 9:15 – 10:30am, MSC Book Club, *Strong Ground* by Brené Brown, HYBRID: MSC office, 550 Forest Ave, Suite 206, Portland or via zoom

Wednesday, February 4, 9am – noon, Winter Workshop followed by the Business Networking Extravaganza, 12:15 – 2:45pm, DoubleTree by Hilton Portland, South Portland

Friday, March 27, Maine State Meeting & Social at the NE Camp Conference, details TBA (4:45 – 6:45pm; tentative)

Semi-Annual Meeting, Spring date TBA

ACA CONFERENCE DATES & LOCATIONS

Tuesday, February 17 – Friday, February 20, American Camp Association Conference, Town and Country Resort, San Diego CA. Early Bird Registration ends December 16.

Tuesday, March 10 – Thursday, March 12, Tri-State Camp Conference, Atlantic City Convention Center, Atlantic City, NJ, Early Bird Registration ends January 31.

Thursday, March 26 – Saturday, March 28, New England Camp Conference, DoubleTree by Hilton Downtown, Manchester, NH, Early Bird Registration ends February 5.

Please visit our Google Calendar for Committee Meeting dates and more information as new webinars and workshops are scheduled.



Click here for the MSC Google Calendar link