

# Cobscook Currents

Fall 2021



# Wintering

Dear Cobscook Community,

**I write to you today as a Cobscook Institute Board Member of 7 years, a Washington County community resident living in Pembroke, a citizen of the Passamaquoddy tribe and a professor of linguistics.**

Our roles in life should not be viewed as separate from each other. Everything we do in our lives can be understood in a sense of relationship where each part makes up the whole. If you've ever been in a canoe on a river in the forest you understand; at a certain point your body and the canoe become one with the river and the forest is also part of you, cradling and even guiding you.

This sense of relationship is mirrored in the seasons and cycles of life in Native American tradition. We all begin life as babies, needing care. We become caregivers before making the trip back to once again needing care ourselves. The beginning and end of each cycle is a ceremony. I know this from the traditional stories that were told and passed down through generations. Stories play a critical role in orienting us and guiding our actions forward. Stories and dreams of the inner world are essential to the organization of the outer world. Our actions in the outer world may at times seem insignificant – but they are not, they make meaning in the stories told for generations to come.

The stories we make as we travel through life give sense to the world around us. I like to tell my students, "I don't want you to believe anything I tell you in this class, I just want you to think about it and come to your own conclusions." The more they can differentiate what is being told from what is to be known, from their own ways of seeing and knowing, the more their minds can be formed and go to work for all of us.

**Just like this, our vision for the future, for the possibility of Cobscook Institute, is only as strong as the relationships, dreams, visions and perspectives that we arrive at, and make possible.**

I am honored to welcome our visionary community members found here and other points global to weave a new dream with us now. We find ourselves emerging from a summer that glorified everything the pandemic had kept hidden and we emerge changed, with the understanding that the lack of change would indicate death! So, we embrace the change with enthusiastic vigor! New forms of life and new arteries have grown this summer and we head into fall and like the natural world, we are inseparable from this process of life. We are fortified and ready to drop our leaves.

As the earth hardens and starts to freeze it tanks the energy for a great Spring. The dreams and stories we whisper and share now will be woven into that next emerging cycle. Though nature may drop its buds, it is far from dead. There are dreams that come as we rest, in the winter. You may not even remember these dreams but they allow you to get fully rested.

**I hope you will join us during this important moment at Cobscook Institute, to share the dreams we have for "Someday at Cobscook" to plant the seeds that will germinate in the Spring.**

Kulankeyasin,

Newell Lewey - Peskotomuhkat





# Cobscook Center

## Summer Craft Programming Was a Hit!



We were so pleased to be able to safely offer in-person craft programming this summer after so many months of only being able to offer online programming due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Here are some highlights:

- Crafting at Cobscook- inspired by some of our earliest programming, the Cobscook Gatherings- 15 participants gathered for a four-day intergenerational immersion experience to focus on silk-screening or pottery.
- Local fiber artist Gabi Montoya-Eyermann taught a needle felting class
- Pottery studio improvements: Fewer people on campus over the past year and a half offered an opportunity to reinvest in our pottery studio. We regularly hear from community members that our pottery studio is such a unique and appreciated asset, so we now have a new kiln, a more organized and welcoming workspace, regular pottery classes, and a new addition: open studio time. Visit our website or contact Michelle Cousineau for more information ([michelle@cobscookinstitute.org](mailto:michelle@cobscookinstitute.org) or 207-255-7246).

Craftspeople are invited to partner with Cobscook to share their skills and passions with the community via workshops, clubs, and classes. Visit our website for more information and to submit a proposal. Whether you are a potter, fiber artist, painter, photographer, basket-maker, home canning expert, or something else, let us know what you would like to offer. Contact Daphne ([daphne@cobscookinstitute.org](mailto:daphne@cobscookinstitute.org) or 207-255-7623) for more information.

### Recent Program Partnerships

Our beautiful campus serves not only our own programs, but is also serves as a hub from which we build relationships and partnerships. Our campus is the “homeplace” for our own programs, collaborative initiatives, and also for other organizations to run their programming here. For example, this summer Healthy Acadia led its Downeast Teen Leadership Camp here. The program was a stunning success, with one camper remarking, “why haven’t we always had camp here?”

After a year of few gatherings, the Cobscook campus served as headquarters for the 18th Annual Downeast Spring Birding Festival, a collaborative project of Maine Sea Grant, Downeast Lakes Land Trust, Moosehorn National Wildlife Refuge, Maine Birding Trail, and Maine Audubon. This year, in addition to in-person guided trips, the festival offered six online events over the course of the weekend. Further, we offered a first ever Summer Birding Festival in August. To increase access to participation, we waived the registration fee for both festivals. This was made possible through philanthropic support from the Onion Foundation, Approximately 200 people participated in the festival events.



## Cobscook Experiential Programs Expanding our Reach through New Summer Camps

In response to local parents and youth seeking additional fun summer learning opportunities, we offered two new summer camps for local youth this year. These camps helped us offer more choices to local teens and interlinked with our other experiential program offerings to build upon our expertise in interdisciplinary outdoor and arts programming.

### ***Teen Art Camp***

The vision for this camp was to be an affirming place for self-expression guided in part by participating teens. Alongside camp leads Anne Shields Hopkins and Maria McMorrow, teens were able to select from a menu of different art experiences each day so they could work on their own work during open studio time, learn new techniques, and learn new ways of self-expression. Our new classroom and studio space was the perfect setting for this camp. Teens also enjoyed a field trip to explore Eastport's arts scene. They visited the Tides Institute, Eastport Arts Center, and listened to Music on the Rocks.

"I learned some new and interesting art skills. I liked painting and getting to have free time, and going to Eastport! I'd like to see Art Camp offered again." -Teen Art Camp Participant

"I liked seeing new people and being able to try new things. I got new skills and interests out of the camp." -Teen Art Camp Participant

### ***Outdoor Skills Camp***

This camp, designed for younger teens, had full enrollment. They met on campus each day but headed into the field to learn and apply new outdoor skills. They learned paddling basics at Rocky Lake, practiced those skills on the Orange River, hiked a mountain, built shelters and fires, and paddled to a campsite for an overnight campout.

Parents shared that they were especially excited to have this opportunity for this younger teen age group since there aren't currently many summer opportunities for them.

## River Camp's Ninth Season

2021 was our ninth summer offering River Camp in partnership with Downeast Salmon Federation. As usual, teens interested in conservation careers engaged in Atlantic salmon habitat improvement projects and recreation improvement projects on Downeast Salmon Federation's public access sites. They also collected water quality data on the Orange River and practiced whitewater canoeing skills on the Machias River.

One parent offered this regarding their teen's experience: "My child had an amazing time at River Camp—great friendships, connection to the stars and river, great experiences working together and just plain FUN!! We are really grateful for this amazing life-changing program. He chattered excitedly all the way home and beyond. He especially loved his counselors very much. I will not be surprised at all if he pursues a career connected to environmental sciences and sustainability."



Camp was full this year and we had a waiting list, so be sure to sign up for our e-newsletter by visiting [cobscook.co/subscribe](https://cobscook.co/subscribe) to be notified in early 2022 when registration materials are available for our 10th River Camp!

### Thanks to our Philanthropic Partners!

River Camp is a free camp where campers receive a stipend for their participation. The Teen Art Camp and Outdoor Skills Camp were offered on a sliding scale. Families contributed 20% of what the actual costs were so it takes philanthropic support to make these programs accessible to families. Thanks to three long-time funding partners who have made these summer opportunities possible:



### A New School Year is Here

The 12th year of our public experiential high school program has begun with full enrollment! Students recently returned from a canoe trip learning about canoe culture, indigenous technology, Thoreau's writing and records of seasonal changes, climate adaptation, and art.

This year we are expanding our after school clubs which are open to our students and the greater community. Chess Club will start this fall and Art Club this winter. Contact us at [cobscook.me/contact](https://cobscook.me/contact) if you'd like to organize an after school club.



## “Someday at Cobscook Institute” and the Generosity of Vision

*Several years ago at TREE: Trauma-Responsive Equitable Education, we invited students to dream big by starting a vision of what they would see “Someday.”*

In 1999, a group of community members from the Passamaquoddy Tribe, the Euro-American community, and our neighbors from nearby New Brunswick, Canada, asked the question, “What would improve life in our rural region?”

Cobscook Institute was born from community co-creation. Such creation is made possible by the gifts of wisdom and dreaming of many people.

Twenty two years later we are calling you back in - our Cobscook family and friends - to bring the gifts of your vision to programs and opportunities ahead. As shared by our Board Member, Newell Lewey in the opening letter to this newsletter - every being has an offering to make to the thriving, joy and wellbeing of our collective. If you are reading this and thinking “they are not talking about me,” you are mistaken!

Several years ago at TREE: Trauma-Responsive Equitable Education, we invited students to dream big by starting a vision of what they would see “Someday.” The creative answers that emerged were inspiring, moving, and fun. We did our best to make as many of those dreams come true as possible.

Inspired by this past experience and driven by a need to refresh our commitment to being a homeplace for innovation, we want to go bigger this year. We invite all of you to plunge into the collective dreaming space with us and answer: “What dreams do we have, stories we can envision for “Someday at Cobscook Institute.”

Please go online to [cobscook.me/someday](https://cobscook.me/someday) to share your dream with us! All of the answers we receive will be put into a collective mapping and collaborative design process in the early part of next year - and you will be invited!

You are also invited to share your contribution on your facebook, twitter or instagram profile with #somedayatcobscook -- **if you take this step to share our collective dreaming with the world you will be entered into a raffle for a weekend for two at the Heartwood Lodge or a class of your choice at Cobscook Institute!**

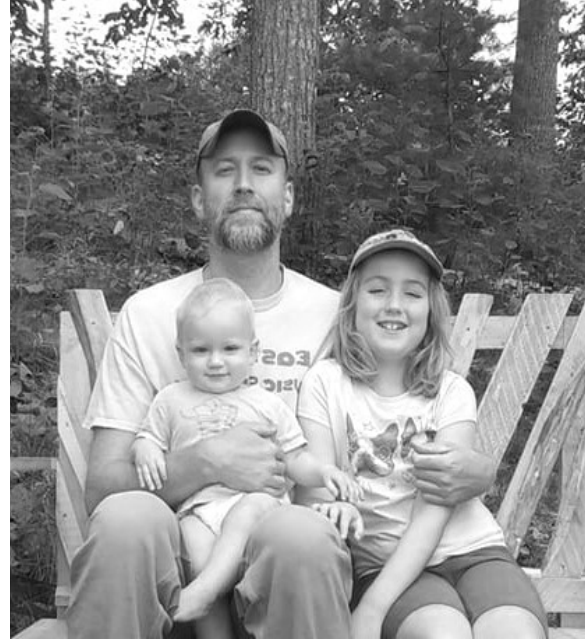
We look forward to strengthening a homeplace for innovation with all of you. Here’s what a few of our community members already shared:

## Colin Brown

Since 2011, Colin has been involved with Cobscook Institute as a program participant, leader, and partner. He became familiar with us early on by guiding intergenerational Road Scholar trips based on campus, then co-led an outdoor adventure club. For the last eight years, he has been a key volunteer for the Downeast Spring Birding Festival, including serving on the planning committee.

A particular Cobscook highlight for Colin came last year after he and his wife Laura, daughter Nora, and one-week old son Jamie picked a few bushels of apples near their home in Pembroke. They came to use our cider press for the afternoon, ultimately making gallons of cider and apple cider vinegar.

“I would love to see more opportunities like that at Cobscook Institute,” Colin said. “Shared community ‘stuff’ and spaces for creating things and learning cooperatively.” He also spoke highly of the value of the high school program and a hope for that model to extend into middle and elementary school options as well. Colin’s a dreamer with lots of great ideas, but if he had to pick one thing, he said, “Someday at Cobscook Institute, I would love to see more outdoor music offerings on the beautiful stage. Milbridge, Machias, and Eastport all have success with outdoor concerts, Cobscook Institute could too!” Seven-year-old Nora chimed in, “Someday I want to play on the stage at Cobscook!”



## Stephanie Bailey

“My childhood years were spent at Sipayik and I later followed my heart to our sister reservation, Motahkomikuk,” Stephanie said. “Living at Motahkomikuk, I woke to the harsh world of how badly the 1980 Land Act has fractured us deeply and quickly so I began volunteering to write a newsletter and hand deliver them to help get information out and to teach.”

Meanwhile, Stephanie was working with several others on the Passamaquoddy reservation to start a non-profit type of school at the same time that Cobscook Institute (then known as Cobscook Community Learning Center) was beginning to plan for a similar educational model. “I had visions of a school for our villages that was similar enough to Cobscook’s model that I felt I could put my efforts towards Cobscook in hopes of one day having a satellite campus with Passamaquoddy culture woven throughout. I felt like Cobscook Institute with its already diverse board could help bring this idea to fruition.” So she joined the Cobscook family in support of these efforts in the early 2000’s.

Today, Stephanie is enthusiastic about how our experiential learning model lives on. She reflected warmly on our growth over more than twenty years now, expressing appreciation for “the diversity you still have in people and in the classes/programs you offer.”

Someday at Cobscook Institute, Stephanie would love to see our work in experiential, trauma-responsive education models connect to the tribal school systems.



## Regina Grabrovac

Since 2012, Regina's involvement with Cobscook Institute has primarily centered upon apples. She helped lead and coordinate pruning and grafting workshops, bringing in apple experts from around the state, and later partnered with us to coordinate Downeast Apple Day in 2019 which welcomed over 200 people to learn about and celebrate apples. Regina's son also attended the high school program for two years and he and Regina's daughter attended River Camp.

Regina couldn't fill in the "Someday at Cobscook Institute" blank with just one thing, though she especially hopes that the "awesome infrastructure" of campus will be much more utilized by the community. To do that, she had several ideas:

1. Expand the community garden: "Every town needs a community garden," she said, "you shouldn't have to travel far to be able to go pick veggies." She would love to see the community garden directly serve a community need and incorporate more garden programming to draw people in.
2. Increase campus plantings and apple tree maintenance: Regina would love to see people walk onto campus and see great examples of productive apple trees, asparagus plantings, and other veggies they might not be used to seeing grow to inspire people to grow their own at home.
3. More workshops in home crafts, like canning or chair-caning, and more ways for people to access those learning opportunities.

"So much of what Cobscook Institute does is so needed," Regina reflected. "Someday I hope it can expand and reach more people in meaningful ways."







## Ways of Giving: Stronger Together

You might be surprised to learn that of the \$471 billion in US charity last year, households with income below 50,000 gave the most, second only to the wealthiest 1%. Or you may be surprised that one in six households practices charity. Or that Moms between the ages of 35-44 volunteer more hours than any other demographic. (<https://www.definefinancial.com/blog/charitable-giving-statistics/>)

We are not surprised. We witness daily acts of generosity that confirm all of this and more.

Life here in downeast Maine is filled with blessings that are seasoned with challenges. Whatever may come, we pride ourselves on our ability to show up for each other.

Now is one of those times. Many people - young and old- cannot make it to Cobscook Institute for classes, events and other offerings because of transportation issues, or because they may not know about our scholarship program offered for all classes.

In 2022 we want to show 100 more people that the community is behind them. We have always had a scholarship fund to support families and individuals in accessing programs. Someday we want to ensure that every program is free to all residents of Washington County. We are on the path and plowing forward with your support!

Another fun fact: Online giving rose a whopping 20% in 2020!

We are on board for the national trends and those in our community! On Giving Tuesday, November 30th every donation pledged online, regardless of amount, will be matched with \$100. This will go on until we bring in 50 donors or hit our total goal of \$10,000 for the day. This will open new possibilities for 100 more people.

Every gift is valuable and needed. You may be able to give 30 dollars today. You may need it back in 4 months. Let's top up this fund a little more with the support of a generous match and the knowledge that we are stronger together!

Whether you can make a gift of \$1,000 or \$10, it is the act that matters. Join us on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and in your email inbox on Giving Tuesday to be a part of the excitement.

## Goodbye for now!

On the theme of season change and possibility, I have a more personal story to share...

I first learned of Cobscook Institute (then Cobscook Community Learning Center) in 2015 when I was wrapping up my Master's program at Antioch University New England. At the time, my partner Joe Horn and I were finalizing plans to incorporate Maine Outdoor School, L3C (MOS) in Milbridge, just an hour away from Cobscook.

Like so many others, I have found Cobscook to be a welcoming space where I could connect, learn, and expand my horizons. In an effort to learn from and support a nearby organization with shared values, I offered to do my Master's internship and final project in support of Cobscook Institute's work. I developed a marketing plan for Heartwood Lodge, an evaluation plan for the high school program, and provided an organizational sustainability analysis. All of these experiences brought new insights into my own purpose work and future vision.

As the seeds for MOS were germinating after we incorporated in 2016, I continued to support Cobscook Institute as the lead coordinator, writer, and editor of Cobscook Currents. Later, I began writing the e-newsletter, Cobscook Waves, and became a grant writer for Cobscook Institute. Meanwhile, I even led some MOS programs with partners like Island Institute and Bowdoin Upward Bound on the beautiful Cobscook Institute campus.

Those seeds Joe and I planted over five years ago have developed into the blooming plant that is Maine Outdoor School today. With my outdoor programming at public schools across Washington and Hancock Counties having tripled this fall compared to last fall, it was time for me to step away from my Cobscook Institute work so that I can now focus my full time energy on MOS.

While this is an exciting step, it is certainly one full of mixed emotions as Cobscook Institute has been a big part of my life for the past six years. The good news is, I am still in Downeast Maine and am confident I will continue to collaborate with Cobscook Institute in my MOS work moving forward!

- Hazel Stark



# Summer 2021 Programming Highlights



*High school students at the WCCC ropes course*



*Community members volunteering to build picnic tables for the campus*



*River Camp participants*



*Art Camp participants*



*DownEast Teen Leadership Camp participants*

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Formerly Cobscook Community Learning Center | Learn more: [cobscook.co/name](https://cobscook.co/name)



## Cobscook Institute Team

### Staff

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*Finance Manager*

**Michelle Cousineau**

*Executive Associate, Development Programs Associate*

*& CEP Driver*

**Ryan Cross**

*Grounds and Maintenance Associate*

**Daphne Loring**

*Cobscook Center Manager and*

*Cobscook Institute Co-Leader*

**Bonnie Lyons**

*Facilities Manager, Custodial Coordinator & Guest*

*Relations Associate*

**Kara McCrimmon**

*Director, Cobscook Experiential Programs and*

*Cobscook Institute Co-Leader*

**Dylan Pardue**

*IT Manager and Communications Coordinator*

**Damon Weston**

*Teacher, Cobscook Experiential Programs; Human*

*Relations Shepherd*

### Board

**Sanna McKim**

*Co-Chair*

**Frank Trocco**

*Co-Chair*

**Ron Beckwith**

*Treasurer*

**Alan Furth**

**Mark Hoffman**

**Newell Lewey**

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