

Fall 2022

YMCA CAMP
CONISTON CHRONICLE
FOR YMCA CAMP CONISTON ALUMNI AND THE CAMP COMMUNITY



THE LODGE

the **HEART of**
CONISTON
turns **100!**

Blog

AN INTERACTIVE VERSION IS AVAILABLE
WITH LIVE LINKS TO BLOGS AND VIDEOS
[CONISTON.ORG/2022-CHRONICLE.PDF](https://coniston.org/2022-chronicle.pdf)

PHOTO BY EVAN RUDERMAN, ALUMNUS & ARTIST IN RESIDENCE



A PUBLICATION OF YMCA CAMP CONISTON • PO BOX 185, GRANTHAM NH 03753 • [WWW.CONISTON.ORG](https://www.coniston.org)



Present

INSIDE *this issue*

The Heart of Coniston Turns One Hundred	pgs 2-3
A BUILDING FOR ALL: Capital Campaign Goes Public.....	pgs 4-7
Alumni Return to Camp.....	pg 8
Alumni Get Camp Ready.....	pg 9
Alumni Concert Series	
Performers Return to Share Their Talent with Campers and Staff.....	pg 10
Artist in Residence: Evan Ruderman	pg 11
2022 Camperships	pg 12
Thank You Helen Gurley Brown Foundation	pg 13
New Program Area: Cooking.....	pg 14
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Fellowship	pg 15
Vespers: Staff Share Inspiring Messages	pg 16
Camp News	pgs 17-20
Alumni News	pgs 21-25
#GivingTuesday: November 29, 2023	Back Cover



1994-1999



1970-1993



1969-1970



1964-1968



1936-1963



1911-1935

2022/2023 HAPPENINGS

ALUMNI, PARENTS & FRIENDS

If you wish to attend events please let us know how we can reach you by updating your info: www.coniston.org/alumni or jesse@coniston.org

NOVEMBER 29, 2023
GIVING TUESDAY

JANUARY 2023
SUNSHINE LUNCHEON
NEW LONDON, NH

FEBRUARY 2023
LONDON, UK EVENT

MAR/APR 2023
CAREER NETWORKING
AND EVENING SOCIALS
MANCHESTER, NH
BOSTON, MA
NEW YORK, NY

SPRING 2023
VOLUNTEER WORK DAY
AT CAMP CONISTON

SPRING 2023
LOS ANGELES, CA EVENT
HOUSTON, TX EVENT
WASHINGTON, DC EVENT

SUMMER 2023
2001/2002/2003
CIT 20 YEAR REUNION
AT CAMP CONISTON

YMCA CAMP CONISTON MISSION STATEMENT

As a nonprofit service organization with a focus on youth, YMCA Camp Coniston creates experiences that build spirit, mind and body for all.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mary Helen Morris, Chair
Riverside, CT

Lynne Schiffman Delise,
Vice Chair
New London, NH

Jon Marvin, Treasurer
Bow, NH

Stefan Timbrell, Secretary
New London, NH

Neil Abramson
New Orleans, LA

John Calcutt
Tucson, AZ

Chris Eldredge
Sunapee, NH

Rolf Gesen
Concord, NH

Catherine Johnson
Hanover, NH

Katie Smidt
Hopkinton, NH

Bob Stasey
Graham, NH

Brian Sung
Newton, MA

Michael J. Work
New London, NH

Tricia Brooks, Emerita

Greg Bryant, Emeritus

Katie Gardner, Emerita

Brian Grip, Emeritus

STAFF

John Tilley
Executive Director

Lorraine Newcomb
Registrar

John McNair
Summer Camp &
Operations Director

Nicole Berthiaume
Summer Camp & Staff
Development Director

Lindsey Tompkins, CFRM
Director of Mission Advancement

Jesse Ladd
Alumni Relations & Development

Dale Cunningham
Controller

Jill Reynolds
Camp & Non-Profit Associate

Ollie Andrews, Adam Eaton,
James Newcomb, & Dave Savio
Maintenance



DIRECTOR'S 2¢



I'll never forget my first closing campfire twenty-three summers ago. **MARCUS STACEY** was named honor camper. The first thing you noticed about Marcus was his kindness—but there was another noticeable thing that made Marcus special—he was mostly wheelchair bound. I remember turning to the Boys Camp Director at the time and saying, *"We've gotta figure a way to get this kid up Washington—he would be an amazing CIT!"*

That winter a full-time staff member worked with UNH's Adaptive Sports Program to find a wheelchair designed for hiking. The goal was Hermit's Shelter at Tuckerman's Ravine, nine long uphill miles from the base camp. The trail was rough and the pace was slow, Marcus's team helped him over the worst spots and when needed, Marcus crutched over large rocks. As dusk approached a giant thunderstorm rolled in and Marcus decided the trail was too rugged to use the wheelchair. In the 2006 Chronicle, Marcus recalled thinking *"What am I doing? Is there any point in finishing this?"* He took the CIT Director aside and said, *"I really don't know if this is worth it."* But through the spirit of Camp and the help of his fellow CITs carrying him part of the way Marcus became the first person to make it up Tuckerman's Ravine using a wheelchair! In a 2006 Chronicle, Marcus describes the climb as *"a defining moment."* The next day, he ran into Lake Coniston with his fellow CITs for our traditional welcome home.

Silly me. I thought this was a special moment for Marcus. What I didn't know is how Marcus would change Camp—and me. Marcus became a staff member, and he and his fellow CIT friends, **CHRIS CROSS** and Max Rosen took the Drama Department to an entirely different level. Their legacy still lives today in the form of four massive drama productions we enjoy each summer. Coniston needs a place where campers can more fully participate in these elaborate productions. A building where we can sit together in community. The Lodge. This landmark building is one hundred years old and requires restoration and repurposing. That is what our current campaign, and most of this Chronicle, is about.

As impressive as that is, it pales in comparison to what Marcus really taught me: everyone is capable of inspiring others regardless of who they are or the challenges they face. It is a more difficult lesson than you might think. We make the Coniston Community accessible because Camp has the capacity to change any person's life—but we also make it accessible because every person deserves the chance to change your life, regardless of different circumstances. I've seen this ring true again and again and I have Marcus to thank for teaching me this lesson. He is a regular reminder to me of how much these young people change lives, including my own.

I hope you will enjoy reading this Chronicle and discovering the exciting plans we have for the magical space we call the Lodge. By participating in our campaign you can carry on a long legacy of changing lives at Coniston and help save the heart of our Camp facilities.

JOHN TILLEY, CAMP DIRECTOR



THE HEART OF CONISTON TURNS ONE HUNDRED!

This year marks the **100th birthday** of the favorite building on Camp! Every single camper and staff has memories of **the Lodge!** You may have performed in a drama show, created a tie-dye masterpiece in arts and crafts, learned a new dance routine, ate dinner in the old dining hall, stood in line on check-in day to drop off your camper, or lived with friends upstairs while on staff. Each memory holds a special place in our hearts and the Lodge is truly the **heart** and **soul** of Coniston. Here are a few examples of how we used the Lodge in 2022.



Drama shows included Hercules, Princess and the Frog, and Shrek! The past few summers we held our drama performances in the pavilion rather than the Lodge to accommodate the audience. During Session 3, drama and dance participants came together to put on a performance of Encanto! They combined to create a magnificent performance that introduced campers to the culture of several Colombian staff. Three other dance shows took place in New Hampshire Hall and were memorable moments for many campers! Plans of building an indoor/outdoor stage in the Lodge expansion project will create the perfect venue for these shows and will accommodate all of Camp! For everyone wondering, the new stage will be built on the old Dining Hall side of the building!

Every summer, this building hosts our staff training sessions. This year Hilary Schuler, Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center, delivered a Youth Mental Health First Aid Training to all of our program area directors. This training taught staff how to help adolescents who are experiencing mental health issues. Turning Points Network, a non-profit agency also provided staff members with trainings regarding child abuse, sexual assault, and consent. These enhanced trainings helped equip staff members to deal with challenges that pop up during the summer.





Summer after summer, the community gathers on the Lodge porch and main lawn to watch CITs return to Camp and run into the lake. This summer, an all time high of **SIX GROUPS** immersed themselves in this tradition that represents a coming of age for many Coniston campers and staff. The groups hiked Mount Kathadin, Mount

Washington, and the Rockies. We celebrated our CITs by cheering them on as they ran into the lake with 'Eye Of The Tiger' blasting in the background.

"When I spoke to my daughter after her trip to Colorado where she hiked, rafted, and rolled down a dune in the Rockies, I was amazed that she said the best time of the last two weeks was when she ran into the lake back at Coniston!"

"Dad . . . we were running and high fiving everyone . . and I felt like I was flying . . . "

It was then that I realized the absolute magic of the Coniston team that has touched my daughter in her seven incredible years. You help children fly. As a parent, there is no greater joy than seeing your child experience something as powerful as that."

- CIT PARENT

Recognizing this powerful symbolism it was decided to fully welcome international and new staff who were not at Camp during CIT age and provide a time for them to be welcomed into Camp! During 4th session, after a full summer, over forty staff members were celebrated and cheered on as they proudly completed their first summer on the lake.



READ MORE
ON OUR
Blog

"Running into the lake was literally my best memory of camp. The connection that the international group created that day was unreal and emotional. I love this new tradition!"

—ALE, CABIN COUNSELOR FROM PUEBLA, MEXICO

When all is said and done, we are left with a sense of belonging, achievement, and connection from the summer of 2022. Belonging to a place where we can truly be ourselves. Pushing ourselves out of our comfort zones and achieving goals. Being reunited with old friends and making new connections with people from all walks of life and all over the world. We created connections between people that allow people to heal and learn to trust all over again.

Celebrating the heart of Coniston—the Lodge—turning one hundred years old makes us not only remember the past, but also makes us look to the future. Restoring and expanding the Lodge enables another century of Camp friendships, magical moments, and community. Thank you to all the campers, parents, staff, and donors that have made this year one to remember.



MULTI-YEAR PLAN LEADS TO EXPANSION AND RENOVATION OF THE LODGE

Five years ago, we undertook a long range plan to serve new populations, improve our facilities, and build an endowment for longevity. With **OVER \$6.5 MILLION RAISED** we are proud to show you all the campaign has done so far.



#1 TRANSFORMING LIVES

Provide permanent funding for campers from underserved communities to attend Coniston including the children of veterans and active military; the Concord, NH refugee community; and Sullivan County, NH.



#2 GROWING NOT CHANGING

Renovate and construct facilities that serve Coniston's increasing demand and provide welcoming spaces for campers to practice creativity and build community.



#3 SECURING OUR FUTURE

Ensure the future through creating an endowment that allows the Board to keep prices moderate, staff well-trained, facilities in good repair, and provide career opportunities and development to all alumni through Coniston Community connections.

THE LODGE IMPROVEMENT TIMELINE

2020

STEP 1

Area cleared for new basketball court, motel, laundry, and other buildings. This created additional space for campers to play and make friends every day.

WE *need your help*
TO SAVE THE *Lodge*



2021

Plans temporarily suspended due to COVID.

2022

STEP 2

Basketball court relocated to the new area.



2023

STEPS 3 & 4

Office relocated to site of old basketball court to limit public access to the middle of Camp. Arts & Crafts and Woodshop relocated to space of current office freeing up space for future expansion in the Lodge.

24/25

STEPS RIGHT NOW

Repurpose Arts & Crafts, Woodshop, and NH Hall Space to allow for renovation and expansion of the Lodge.

A BUILDING FOR ALL



Remodeled Exterior to What is Now Currently Arts & Crafts / Old Kitchen



Indoor/Outdoor Stage Added to NH Hall

THE IMPACT OF THE LODGE EXPANSION AND RESTORATION

There is no denying that Camp changes lives and Coniston lives in the hearts of all Conistonians. Coniston has always been about our community of people. That is why we return year after year. Most importantly, the lessons and friendships are lifelong—neither ends with closing ceremony on the final night.

The heart of Camp is the Lodge; in this space Camp changes lives. This is where our mission comes alive in a myriad of ways. It's time to revitalize and expand the Lodge while preserving the past—creating a space for all campers to learn and grow from the Coniston Culture for the next one hundred years.

While beautiful and aesthetically pleasing, from a construction standpoint the Lodge is like an oversized shed. Built on log posts, perched on rocks and cement blocks, the many summers of hard use combined with NH winter weather have taken their toll. The building must be renovated—both because it is undersized, and because

there are many repairs to be made to preserve it for the future.

Plans for the Lodge restoration include a beautiful renovation that will preserve the space so we can make another one hundred years of memories. A new stage will be constructed on the NH Hall/old dining hall side. The stage will open to the outside to maximize program options. A new porch will be built around NH Hall, thus increasing capacity. These plans solve challenges we've been struggling with for years, and allow more campers to participate in drama productions, dance, photography, all-camp gatherings, and more.

YMCA Camp Coniston is serving new populations, playing on beautiful new basketball courts, and creating the leaders our world needs. We hope you will help us save the heart of Camp—the Lodge—so it can deliver another one hundred years of life changing experiences to future generations of Conistonians.

EVERY DONATION WILL BE MATCHED

up to \$1M through the generosity of a group of major donors and Board Members.

Your gift of any size is important to help reach this goal and save our beloved historic Lodge. Please contact lindsey@coniston.org with any questions.



Flexible space allows for simultaneous, multiple large programs by our three divisions, by boys and girls camps, or all together for evening activities.



Ample space for multiple program areas for important skill development during the day.



Current arts and crafts space re-purposed to create needed small group spaces and offices for Boys Camp, Girls Camp, and Program Directors.



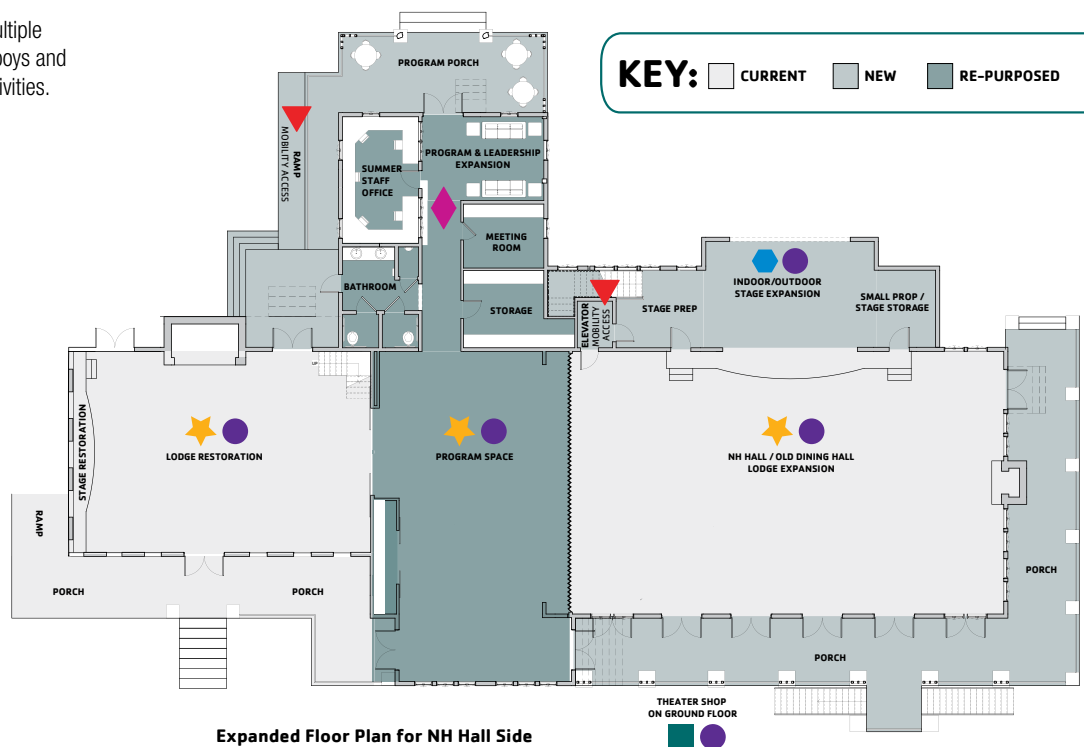
Stage opens to the outdoors and NH Hall, allowing greater capacity and program flexibility.



Facility made ADA compliant for mobility impaired Conistonians.



Current woodshop on ground floor converted to theater shop for set design and assembly.



\$1M

\$2M

\$3M

\$2.317 MILLION RECEIVED

GOAL
\$3.5 MILLION

As of 10/17/22

ALUMNI RETURNED TO CAMP!

READ MORE
ON OUR
Blog



There truly was something special about this summer. Many new faces, but also many familiar ones. We were extremely lucky to have former Girls Camp Director and Associate, **Sara Noble**, return this

summer as a **Camp Nurse!** Sara first came to Coniston in 2005 as a 10-year-old and then went on to be a summer and year-round staff member. She recently graduated from Massachusetts General Hospital Institute of Health Professions with a Master and Bachelor of Science in Nursing. Sara told us: *"I would credit a conversation with Sue Strebel as sealing the deal for my choice to pursue nursing."* It was great to have Sara as part of our nursing team this summer.

.....



There were many familiar faces on check-in days this summer. Thank you so much to **Jen Whitman**, **Zoe Temco**, **Sherm Horton**, **Walker Horton**, and **Andrew Horton** for running our alumni booth!

READ MORE
ON OUR
Blog



This summer, we were excited to have high school science teacher and nature enthusiast, **Nick Newberry**, join our team as our **Camp Naturalist**. With so much wilderness and biodiversity to explore around Camp, Nick was able to capture its beauty with macro photography, as well as dive into some very exciting projects. Nick created handy flash cards detailing the varieties of plant life our bog hosts to be used by our Ecology campers and any other bog explorers. Beyond this summer, Nick has great plans for Coniston, one being research into the loon bird population of the lake. He hopes to compile his research about the native birds in signage by the lake.



Follow us on
Instagram
@ymcacampconiston

AND OUR NATURE PAGE: @ConistonFloraAndFauna



ALUMNI GET CAMP READY!

On June 11th alumni volunteers showed up in force and joined staff to help prepare Camp for the summer. Volunteers worked hard all day, cleaning up Camp, setting up tents, sweeping the Lodge, clearing the trail around the lake, and moving hundreds of benches. The day ended with our alumni teaching our new international staff the Class-A-Clap! Thank you so much to everyone who helped get Camp ready for summer!



ALUMNI CONCERT SERIES

Performers return to share their talent with campers and staff

This summer, we were excited to welcome three Coniston alumni musicians for special Camp performances this summer!

Our first performer of the summer was **Hans Williams**! Hans was a camper and staff member at Coniston, and now a singer-songwriter! During staff training week Hans performed a beautiful set for staff members.



"Coniston was the first place where I really began to feel comfortable playing music in a live setting. Coming back to play for staff this summer reminded me a lot of the talent shows and campfires that gave me the confidence and support to keep pursuing music. I was greeted with the same love and enthusiasm I felt when playing as a camper and counselor."

— HANS WILLIAMS



READ MORE
ON OUR
Blog



Noah Kahan, one of America's premier singer-songwriters, spent time reminiscing with fellow Conistonians. Magic was made as Noah attended dinner where the entire Camp sang one of his songs at the top of their lungs. Noah also performed "Young Heart" at both boys and girls closing campfires and joined the entire Coniston Community for the closing candlelight ceremony.

Over Session 3/4 changeover, Noah played a special staff appreciation concert during which he performed his hit *Stick Season* publically for the first time since its official release. You can see many photos of his time at Coniston on Noah's social media feeds.

On his visit, he spoke about his experiences performing in the talent shows as a camper: *"My first time I ever played an original song was at the talent show, and it was really cool 'cause everyone here was super supportive of it... I got inspired to write more."*

The final performance of the summer was by alumnus **Brooks Hubbard**, a national touring artist from New England. Brooks performed for us all during a Sunday cook-out.

"Coming back to Camp this summer for the first time in many years was like walking into a time machine and opening the doors to my childhood. It was a blast to be able to perform music at the place where I first found the urge to show off my 'skills' at the talent show and it's nice to see not much has changed. It's still that familiar friend I often revisit in my memories and I hope to be back in person again to play for campers."

—BROOKS HUBBARD



ARTIST IN RESIDENCE: EVAN RUDERMAN

Former camper and staff member, **Evan Ruderman**, is now a **freelance outdoor photographer** and a photo assistant to acclaimed photographer Chris Burkard. Evan's photography has taken him all over the world, and this summer we were lucky enough to have him visit Coniston for a week to take breathtaking shots of Camp.

"At the young age of 8 I began to spend my summers at Camp Coniston and I didn't stop for the next 12 years, transitioning from a camper to a counselor to a director. My time at Camp taught me a lot about life, a lot about myself, sparked my love of the outdoors, introduced me to some of my biggest role models, and helped me make some of my best friends to this day.

It's hard to explain the magic of this place without simply experiencing it for yourself but having a chance to return to Camp and try and convey its beauty and mission through photos was quite an honor. It's safe to say I wouldn't be where I am today without my many summers on this lake and to see so many kids sleeping under the stars and playing in the woods without phones or screens or the stresses of everyday life anywhere in sight left me feeling quite happy.

Thank you YMCA Camp Coniston for bringing me out here to shoot photos and for the many years of good memories. The kids will be alright. "

- EVAN RUDERMAN





167 CAMPERSHIPS *provided in 2022*

Growth is the word that best summarizes this year's camperships. Helen Gurley Brown BridgeUP Summer Camp participants from the Bronx doubled in number and the New American program was oversubscribed. Additionally, the Camp Community was fortunate to include two girl campers who were Afghani refugees.

Because we know the difference that summer camp makes to our campers, YMCA Camp Coniston's Board of Directors has made it a top priority to provide more financial assistance and suppress prices, allowing more children to attend Camp who may otherwise not be able to attend.



**NEW AMERICANS
FROM CONCORD, NH AND
BRONX, NY CAMPERS**
PAID FOR BY




**VETERANS & SERVICE
MEMBER FAMILIES**
PAID FOR THROUGH
gifts to the YMCA Camp
Coniston Annual Fund



**UNDER-SERVED
COMMUNITIES OF
SULLIVAN COUNTY**
PAID FOR BY
Newport Community Trust

CHILDREN OF INCARCERATED PARENTS
PAID FOR BY NH Department of Corrections and Private Funding



THANK YOU HELEN GURLEY BROWN FOUNDATION

Coniston is a place where depression ends, anxiety ends, and expectations end. **A PLACE WHERE I BELONGED** and where I learned to talk to people, not judge and love everybody.

—BRIDGEUP CAMPER

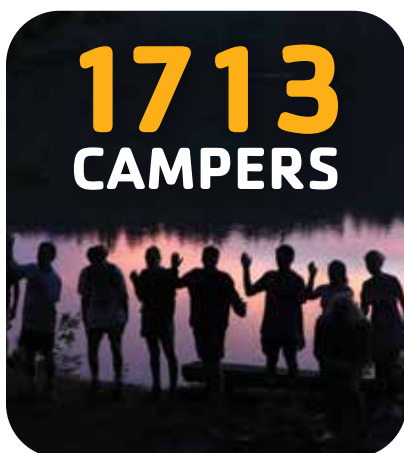
"Last night they shot fireworks and I watched them and realized people are **CELEBRATING BEING WEIRD**. At the moment, **I NEVER FELT MORE COMFORTABLE** ... So thank you for the experience. I really do appreciate it."

—BRIDGEUP CAMPER

I'm very thankful to have been given the opportunity to go to Camp Coniston. It has been one of the **BEST EXPERIENCES OF MY LIFE**. I have made many great friends, even best friends, and I have gotten closer to people I already knew ... Everywhere you look there are counselors/staff that will talk to and help you with whatever you need ... So many amazing experiences, way too many to name them all. Every second you're there with people that now mean the world to you, and I'm so grateful to be able to be there.

Thank you so much.

—CAMPSHIP RECIPIENT



Their first words when we picked them up were '**CAN WE COME BACK FOR THE NEXT SESSION?**'. It was everything we had hoped and more! A quite shy camper danced in the drama show High School Musical and is still talking about the bullseye in archery. Other campers are still in contact with their cabinmates with video chats. And all the campers told me about how excited they were to be able to swim better! Thank you so much for all you do to ensure that these kinds of priceless experiences happen!

—STUART GESEN STORIES HEARD FROM CAMPSHIP RECIPIENTS

**HELEN
GURLEY
BROWN**
—FOUNDATION—

THANK YOU FOR UNDERWRITING A GRANT THAT PROVIDED...

Twelve campers from the Helen Gurley Brown BridgeUP Bronx Program and eighteen New American campers from Concord, NH. This doubled the number of Bronx, NY participants from 2021 plus added an additional five staff from South Africa who worked directly with over 120 individuals teaching them to cook and who also worked in our community serving as role models with over 1,700 participants.

NEW PROGRAM AREA: COOKING

With the encouragement and support of the Helen Gurley Brown Foundation, Coniston partnered with the South African College of Tourism and a new cooking program for campers was added utilizing the skills of five of their students. Over the summer, this program area directly taught over one hundred and twenty campers how to prepare food, learn a new culture, try new flavors, and develop life skills in and outside of the kitchen. Many parents have expressed their surprise at how their children help with meals upon returning home.

These women provided trained staff and a loving presence to the entire Coniston Community. Campers of every age flocked to them and they added additional activities (such as a Chopped Competition) during free time so that everyone could learn from them.

Speaking to a cooking program staff member, we learned how excited she was for the campers to learn about all the new foods and songs she and other staff members were able to share. She explained how important it was for the campers to have fun while also learning key life skills and creating new friendships. *"We hope the campers can learn something from our culture and we can learn something from theirs through cooking."*





DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION FELLOWSHIP

This summer our George Dorr, Jr. Leadership Fellowship recipient was Annika Randall. Annika stated: *"I created a fellowship with the goal being that Coniston is a place where every single person, no matter where they come from or who they are, would feel safe, comfortable and accepted, without having to change any part of their identity for the time they are here. I aimed to create a more diverse and inclusive environment at Camp for both campers and staff."* One of her many roles during the summer was to ensure all campership recipients felt welcome and supported—be that an open ear to listen or by discretely providing supplies that may have needed.

Throughout the summer, Annika worked on many projects including a "gear store". Any staff member who noticed a camper was in need of something was able to go to Annika and she would make sure that child was provided with whatever they needed, whether that was bedding, clothing, or even bunk decorations. Her other work included making pronoun pins available to all campers and staff members, providing all skin tone band-aids to the infirmary, sharing unique facts at vespers about our staff and where they came from, and simply being a resource and listening ear for anyone to check in with.

Another activity that Annika introduced was camper pen pals. Not only was this a great way to ensure that all kids who signed up received letters at mail time, but it also created a connection between campers who may not have known each other otherwise.

"I feel beyond lucky to have worked in this role this summer and I really look forward to how Coniston continues to move forward in future summers as a magical place for any and every one."



VESPERS: STAFF SHARE INSPIRING MESSAGES



Every person and every moment influences who you are. No matter where we originate, Sweden or Africa, you are the perfect combination of everyone and thing in life.

— ANNIKA RANDALL, FELLOW

READ MORE
ON OUR
Blog



Finding a balance in the things you love to do, regardless of what they may be, is essential to living a healthy lifestyle.

— KAITLIN BRAUN, COUNSELOR

READ MORE
ON OUR
Blog



...I hope regardless of where you all see yourself in 5 or 10 years, that you will continue to embrace the things that make you who you are. Because there is no real difference between Camp and 'the real world'. They are one and the same.

— HONOR HEISLER, CIT DIRECTOR

READ MORE
ON OUR
Blog



Every person that steps foot at Camp leaves an impact . . . Every single person in this ring, whether it's your first year or your 20th, has made Coniston what it is today, and that shouldn't be taken lightly.

— COLIN GRIP, TRIP LEADER

READ MORE
ON OUR
Blog



I really encourage you to always, believe in yourselves, try new things, talk to new people, because you never know what you can learn from them.

— ALE CAMPOMANES, COUNSELOR

READ MORE
ON OUR
Blog

WELCOME NEW STAFF: ADAM EATON AND OLLIE ANDREWS



This spring, **Adam** joined our maintenance team. Adam is originally from Cleveland, OH and now lives in Wilmot, NH with his family. He is a huge fan of the Cleveland Guardians and lawn maintenance. If you have any questions about baseball or fall clean up Adam's your man!



Ollie started his journey at Coniston in 2010 as a camper and joined the summer staff in 2017. Since then, he has served the roles of cabin counselor, overnight coordinator, and boys camp director. Ollie studied sustainable energy management at SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry. He is now aiding in the construction of new buildings on campus and maintaining its beauty. When not working you can find him hiking and snowboarding across New England.

ALUMNI RETURN FOR SUMMER LEADERSHIP POSITIONS



Emily Ascarino and **Kyle Olson** took on new roles this summer as **Assistant Summer Camp Directors**. Their responsibilities included assisting John McNair and Nicole in managing Camp, parent contact, and staff training! Over the years Coniston has grown and these two positions enabled Camp to continue being attentive to our Camp families' needs. Emily brought knowledge from years teaching while Kyle brought experience from the world of consulting!

venmo

@YMCACampConiston

No associated fees with donation.

amazonsmile
You shop. Amazon gives.

This holiday season think of YMCA Camp Coniston when you shop. AmazonSmile donates when you shop and thanks to your purchases we have raised over \$2,600!

CONISTON RECEIVES \$100,000 GRANT TO EXPAND CIT PROGRAM

YMCA of the USA's Strategic Initiatives Fund awarded a **\$100,000 Expansion Award** to Camp in order for Coniston to increase the CIT (Counselor in Training) Program from 62 to 104 participants for the summer of 2022, creating a larger pipeline of trained staff enabling Camp to continue serving more campers each year. By creating additional capacity, we met higher parental expectations of more children being able to participate in the final, and most impactful, segment of Coniston's program—youth employment. In addition, with training occurring off-site as well as on, new efficient transportation was also supplied with this grant in the form of a new bus. With generous donations from fellow Conistonians, the grant has been matched, bringing the total to \$200,000 for the project. These gifts get Coniston closer to meeting our strategic priority of improving facilities and making the experience stronger for every camper.



IN MEMORIAM: JESSIE MILNE FREEMAN

READ MORE
ON OUR
Blog



Camp is the opportunity for kids to discover that they can conquer their fears while sharing outdoor fun with others.

Jessie was a camper in the 90s and loved swimming, dancing, riding, and singing, but even more so, she bonded with her fellow Cabin 8 campers as sisters. She returned a decade later as a horseback counselor. Jessie loved her job, helping kids learn to have fun and be safe with large animals. Her counselor experience colored her life's journey toward teaching, the study of human development, and motherhood. She often spoke of her campers' successes and felt honored to be connected to Coniston.

Many people have donated to YMCA Camp Coniston in her memory. It is her family's hope that Coniston will continue to give kids and young adults comradery and a strong start to productive, nurturing lives. We were truly honored to have Jessie be a part of our community and we will miss her dearly.

PITCHER PLANT RESEARCH



Hayley Horton, one of the summer Program Directors and Biological Science student at UVM, carried out a research project, collaborating with one of her professors, on our pitcher plants found in the bog. The aim of their research was

to gather preliminary data on how different antibiotics affect microbial communities within pitcher plants. Hayley is hoping that they will be able to use the data to propose and conduct a full-scale experiment to dig deeper with what they have already found. She is also hoping to pursue an accelerated masters at UVM using this project as her thesis.

"I would encourage anyone to not just consider the traditional paths that might make preliminary sense in becoming a scientist. I didn't have to attend a Math or Science Camp to get where I am today. I was able to use my experiences at Camp Coniston to find meaning in what I learned, and express that meaning to people who could provide me with opportunities. I am so excited for each and every camper to know that whatever you are interested in, be that the Sciences or Humanities, there is a lot of potential with coming to Camp and I wish them all the very best in their learning."

— HAYLEY HORTON, PROGRAM DIRECTOR

READ MORE
ON OUR
Blog

CONISTON TUTORING

Our virtual tutoring program is now open to **all middle-school and high-school aged campers**. If your camper needs some extra support with a school subject, please sign up to Coniston virtual tutoring at: coniston.org/tutor and we will link your child with one of our tutors. The sessions are **completely FREE!**

If you would like to volunteer as a tutor you can sign up at coniston.org/tutor. For any questions about our tutoring program, please contact tutors@coniston.org.

CROYDON TOWN MEETING HELD AT CONISTON

This past May, Coniston hosted a special Town Meeting for Croydon regarding school funding. The meeting was reported on in various national media outlets including the New York Times, ABC news, and This American Life. As a YMCA, Coniston was proud to be a place where its community can convene to make decisions about the future on neutral ground!

CONISTON RECEIVES TWO NATIONAL CAMPSHIP GRANT AWARDS

YMCA Camp Coniston was the recipient of a YMCA of the USA's Strategic Initiatives Fund **\$18,750 Access Award** and received matching amounts from numerous donors. The award allowed twenty children to have a Coniston Experience—two of the campers being from military families.

In addition, Camp received an **Ultra Camp Foundation Award** which provided full camperships to three campers who would otherwise not have the opportunity to attend Camp.

CAMP WINNING SPIRIT CELEBRATES 25+ YEARS

For 25+ years YMCA Camp Coniston has collaborated with New Hampshire Childhood Cancer Lifeline to welcome families into Camp who have been affected by cancer. The weekend was full of classic activities like kickball, pirate night, s'mores and campfire skits! On Sunday, Winning Spirit alumni families and staff joined for a day of celebration. The day ended with a beautiful firework show to commemorate this special weekend and to honor all of the families that have attended. This program was awarded as a "Champions of Children" by NH Governor John Lynch!



This Spring, **The Croydon Volunteer Fire Department** hosted a car wash fundraiser and raised \$745 for Coniston. Thank you so much for hosting, and thank you to all that donated!

FELLOW Y CAMP HOSTS LOCAL SERVICE TRIPS AT CAMP

YMCA Camp Beckett Chimney Corners' service trips brought them to New Hampshire where they completed service projects in the local area. We provided lodging and food free of charge for thirty-nine campers and their staff. It was great to host Camp Beckett and appreciate volunteering in our community.



Thank you to the **King Arthur Baking Company** and **Hypertherm** volunteers who came out to Coniston this fall to help us with some much needed raking around Camp!

COMMUNITY

READ MORE
ON OUR
Blog

READ MORE
ON OUR
Blog



Jen Whitman, is a **teacher** at Kennedy Middle School where she teaches 6th grade English and social studies, as well as coaching track. *"My campers helped me realize that I needed to do a job that involved working directly with kids because I was happiest when I was with them. I would not be as strong of a teacher today without Camp."*



Wilfrid Shon, a former international staff member recently started his own gin business! The gin is called **Shroton Fair Gin**. After finishing his postgraduate study, Wilfrid returned to his hometown, Dorset Village, and spent nearly a year searching for the perfect recipe. The gin has already won multiple awards including gold in the Taste of the West 2022, and bronze at the London Spirits Awards!



1980's alumnae, **Kelly Williamson Polanco**, MBA, MS has started a new job as Vice President, **Head of People & Culture** at Aktis Oncology. In the past, Kelly worked for Bristol Myers Squibb, one of the world's largest pharmaceutical companies. While at BMS, Kelly spent eight years living in Argentina, supporting South America, Middle East, Africa, and parts of Europe.



Jake Glenshaw, former Boys Camp Director, has moved to Innsbruck, Austria for a year in



pursuance of a **Fulbright Austria Combined Research Grant**. As a part of this program, he will be teaching English, taking grad school courses at the University of Innsbruck on Environmental Management of Mountain Areas, conducting independent research under advisement of Dr. Robert Steiger on climate change's impact on the ski industry's adaptability and accessibility, and working with Protect Our Winters Austria as they work to fight for further climate protection.

FOLLOW US ON **LinkedIn**www.linkedin.com/company/ymca-camp-conistonAND JOIN OUR NEW CAREER DEVELOPMENT GROUP: www.linkedin.com/groups/13608842READ MORE
ON OUR
Blog

Talía Ungarelli recently accepted a position as a **zookeeper** in the Tropical Forest department at the Franklin Park Zoo. Talía spent the last year working for the Gladys Porter Zoo in Texas as a Gorilla and Carnivore Keeper/Trainer.



Emily Kohlberg, now works as a **Field Producer** at ABC News Studios in LA! This Fall, a piece that Emily worked on won the News and Documentary Emmy Award for Outstanding Lighting Direction and Scenic Design. Congrats Emily!



Coniston Ambassador, **Eben Gannett**, graduated Granite State College and has become a certified **teacher** in NH. He is currently a 5th grade teacher at Sant Bani School. Congrats Eben, we know you will be an awesome teacher!



Arts and Crafts Director, **Barb Hawley** is teaching classic camp arts and crafts classes in her home-state, Kentucky! Projects include yarn creations, shrink plastic art, holiday ornament making, painting, and of course tie-dye!



Adaleide Barnes, a 2021 CIT is now on the **UK National Taekwondo Team!** She has already secured two second-place finishes at the British Taekwondo National Championships and a spot on the GB Taekwondo Development Squad.



Coniston alumnus, **Noah Kahan**, has just released his new album 'Stick Season' which debuted as #1 in the folk charts and the #2 album overall. Congrats to Noah!



Olivia Rasmussen graduated from Suffolk University with a B.A. in Advertising and Minor in Graphic Design. She recently started as the Content Specialist with Fuseideas!



PLAN YOUR CIT REUNION

If you think it is time to plan your CIT reunion please be sure to contact jesse@coniston.org to plan details for the event.

2000, 2001 AND 2002 CITS REUNITED

This summer we were finally able to host our 2000, 2001 and 2002 CITs for their 20 year reunion! We had to postpone these reunions the past two years due to COVID, but we were finally able to host everyone at Camp for this summer for an amazing day of catching up with old friends, exploring Camp's new facilities and a tasty cook-out! They even reunited with **Sue Strebel**, who was a nurse when they were at Camp and was still working this summer!



CONISTON REUNIONS



Coniston ambassador, **Beth Worthington** planned a weekend reunion with **Linda Pinkham Wiewel**, **Janet Hatfield Legro**, **Susie Greenawald Ammatelli**, **Lynn Hunter Horton**, **Dawn Ferguson Ighodaro** and **Sherrill Hudson** at Perkins Pond. The group also visited Camp and toured all the new facility updates.



BECOME AN CONISTON AMBASSADOR!

Are there a bunch of Coniston alumni in your area and you want to host an event? Do you like to get free Coniston swag and take silly photos? Well then you need to become a Coniston Ambassador. Email Jesse at jesse@coniston.org to get started.



Congratulations to **Hannah and Michael Slafsky** for welcoming their beautiful baby Hartford on September 6th! Warner will be a great big brother!



Congratulations to Coniston alumna, **Ashley**, who got married to Bill Jantzen last year! We hope you have had a great first year of marriage together.



READ MORE
ON OUR
Blog



Congratulations, **Guiseppe Marzelli**, on his marriage to Kaley Hansen! They were married in October last year. **"Hands down the best day of my life (and really the best weekend) marrying my best friend surrounded by all our family and friends"** We wish you a future of happiness!

Congratulations to **Ben Kamisar** on his marriage to Shelby this April! The wedding was quite the Coniston reunion with Coniston alumni: **Jen Evans, Emily Bensen, Michelle (Tarkulich) Faithfull, Kyle Olson, Katie Comstock, and Matt Comstock** attending!



Summer Office Assistant, **Sophie Burleigh**, has just accepted a job as an Office Manager/PA for a wine investment company in London! Good luck with your new London life Sophie!

STAY INFORMED ABOUT CONISTON
HAPPENINGS—REGISTER AS AN ALUM
coniston.org/alumni



Cassie (Short) McLaughlin, a 2008 CIT and 2014/2015 CIT Director got married on June 19th! Congratulations Cassie!! We wish you both a happy future together.



Coniston Board Member and alumna, **Katie Smidt** and alumnus **Max Winer** welcomed a baby boy, Andrew last month! Congratulations, we can't wait to meet him!



Former camper and staff member, **Caitlin Elgert** and her husband Dan, welcomed a daughter (and future camper), **Lucy** in April 2022. Congratulations! She is beautiful.



Coniston alumna, **Lizbie Harbison Weeks** recently got married! Congratulations Lizbie!

facebook

DONATE

FOLLOW US TO LEARN ABOUT UPCOMING EVENTS AND TO DONATE WITH NO ASSOCIATED FEES.



@YMCACampConiston



YMCA Camp Coniston
PO Box 185
Grantham, NH 03753-0185

www.coniston.org | (603) 863-1160

PRSR STD
U.S. Postage
PAID
Manchester, NH
Permit No. 724

#GIVINGTUESDAY

NOVEMBER 29TH | SAVE & RESTORE THE LODGE

DOUBLE YOUR DONATION TO CAMP!



Join us on **#GIVINGTUESDAY** to help **RESTORE** and **SAVE THE LODGE**. On **TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 29TH** all **GIFTS WILL BE MATCHED** through the generosity of **FACEBOOK** & **BAR HARBOR BANK & TRUST**.

If your donation is made through **FACEBOOK** or **VENMO** @YMCACampConiston, Coniston will receive 100% of the donation with no associated fees. If you prefer, you can mail a check with **#GivingTuesday** in the memo line to have your gift matched!

facebook



[CONISTON.ORG/GIVE](https://www.coniston.org/give)