

# Maine Conservation Connection

## Maine Conservation Corps



### February 2011



Maine Conservation Corps  
124 State House Station  
Augusta, ME 04333-0124  
1-800-245-JOBS (in Maine)  
207-624-6085

[corps.conservation@maine.gov](mailto:corps.conservation@maine.gov)  
<http://www.maine.gov/doc/parks/mcc>

### Environmental Educators Start Service

On January 3<sup>rd</sup>, the MCC welcomed 20 new and returning Environmental Educators. After three days of training (including MCC AmeriCorps orientation, CPR/First Aid certification, and Maine Driving Dynamics), the new members dispersed across Maine to start serving at their individual host sites. This year's host sites are located all over the state with many in Augusta, Portland and the mid-coast region. These members will be focusing on numerous projects including trail design & construction, volunteer coordination, children's nature programs, watershed assessments and energy education, among many others.

**Jessica Balukas** of Brentwood, NH is serving 1700 hours at the Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) Biological Monitoring program in Augusta. Balukas is a 2010 graduate of Colby College where she studied Biology & Japanese.

**Dee Clark** of Rockport, ME is serving 1700 hours with the Newforest Institute in Brooks. Clark is a 2007 graduate of the University of Maine where she studied Peace Studies, Psychology & Music.

**Stewart DesMeules** of Newcastle, ME is serving 900 hours with the Medomak Valley Land Trust (MVLT) in Waldoboro. DesMeules is 2010 graduate of Wheaton College in Massachusetts where he studied Biology & Environmental studies. He previously served 900 hours at MVLT in 2010.

**Timothy Duclos** of Benson, VT is serving 1700 hours with the Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge in Wells. Duclos is a 2009 graduate of the University of Vermont where he studied Wildlife & Fisheries Biology.

**Emily Ellingson** of North Mankato, MN is serving 1700 hours at the Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens (CMBG) in Boothbay. Ellingson is a 2009 graduate of St. Olaf College where she studied Biology & Environmental Studies. She previously served 1700 hours with CMBG in 2010.

**Ben Godsoe** of Farmington, ME is serving 1700 hours with the Sandy River Land Trust & High Peaks Alliance in Phillips. Godsoe is a 2005 graduate of Wheaton College where he studied Political Science. He served 1700 hours in the same position in 2010.

**David Hammes** of Port St. Lucie, FL is serving 1700 hours with the Bureau of Parks & Lands (BPL) at Bradbury Mountain State Park & Mackworth Island State Park in southern Maine. Hammes is a 2006 graduate of Eastern Iowa Community College. He previously served with the MCC as a Field Team Member in 2005, an Assistant Team Leader in 2007, and a Team Leader in 2008 & 2009.



L to R: Sarah Lambson, Aaron Mathias, Megan Welch, Geoffrey Ng, Laura Keating, Tim Duclos, Mike McGlinn, Heather Stukas, Rebekkah Kolak, Leo Maheu, Ruth Indrick, Sarah Gaffney, Stewart DesMeules, Cindy Montanez, Emily Ellingson, Jessica Balukas, Ben Godsoe  
Not pictured: Angela Ferrelli, Kerri Oddenino, Susan Pienta, Frank Sokol, David Hammes, & Dee Clark.

**Ruth Indrick** of LaFayette, NY is serving 1700 hours at the Department of Marine Resources in Boothbay. Indrick is a 2008 graduate of Smith College where she studied

Geology. She previously served in AmeriCorps as a Community Stewardship Coordinator through the Northwest Service Academy.

**Laura Keating** of Wilkes-Barre, PA is serving 900 hours with the BPL at the Androscoggin Riverlands. Keating is a 2008 graduate of Shippensburg University where she studied Marketing & Art. She previously served 900 hours in the same position in 2010.

**Rebecca Kolak** of Des Plaines, IL is serving 1700 hours with the Kennebec Estuary Land Trust in Bath. Kolak is a 2007 graduate of Hope College where she studied Biology & Chemistry. She served 1700 hours as an MCC Environmental Educator at the Pemaquid Watershed Association in 2010.

**Sarah Lambson** of Columbia, MO is serving 1700 hours with Merryspring Nature Center in Camden. Lambson is a 2009 graduate of the University of Missouri-Columbia where she studied Fisheries & Wildlife and Biology. She previously served in AmeriCorps as an Interpretive Ranger in New Hampshire with the Student Conservation Association.



CPR/First Aid Training

**Leo Maheu** of Berkeley, CA is serving 1700 hours at the Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge in Wells. Maheu is a 2008 graduate of California State University at Chico where he studied Theatre Arts. In 2010, he served 1700 hours as an MCC Environmental Educator with Merryspring Nature Center.

**Aaron Mathias** of New Riegel, OH is serving 1700 hours with the Maine Department of Conservation's Outdoor Recreation Program in Augusta. Mathias is a 2008 graduate of Ohio State University where he studied Technology Education. He previously served with the MCC as a Field Team Member during the 2009 summer and fall seasons and a Team Leader during the 2010 summer and fall seasons.

**Mike McGlenn** of Conshohocken, PA is serving 900 hours at the Maine Energy Education Program (MEEP) in Augusta. McGlenn is a 2008 graduate of Marist College where he studied Environmental Science & Psychology. He served 1700 hours with the MCC & MEEP in 2010.

**Cynthia Montanez** of Peterborough, NH is serving 1700 hours with the DEP Stream Team in Portland. Montanez is a 2008 graduate of Western Washington University where she studied Environmental Science & Biology. She served 1700 hours in the same position with the DEP in 2010.

**Kerri Oddenino** of Arlington, VA is serving 1700 hours with the DEP Biological Monitoring program in Portland. Oddenino is a 2010 graduate of Dickinson College where she studied Environmental Science & French. She previously served in AmeriCorps as a Desert Ecology Research Intern through the U.S. Geological Survey and Student Conservation Association.

**Susan Pienta** of Valatie, NY is serving 1700 hours at the DEP Watershed program in Portland. Pienta is a 2007 graduate of Boston University where she studied Environmental Science. She previously served in AmeriCorps as a Watershed Stewards Project Member with the California Conservation Corps.

**Frank Sokol** of Camden, ME is serving 1700 hours with the Maine Center for Disease Control's (CDC) Drinking Water program in Augusta. Sokol is a 1976 graduate of the University of Pittsburgh where he studied Chemical Engineering & Chemistry. This is Sokol's third term of service with the MCC & CDC. He served 900 hours in 2009 and 1700 hours in 2010 in the same position.

**Heather Stukas** of Lewiston, ME is serving 1700 hours with the DEP Streams & Bacteria program in Augusta. Stukas is a 2009 graduate of the University of Maine where she studied Biology & History. She served 900 hours with the MCC & DEP in the same position in 2010.

**Megan Welch** of Marcellus, NY is serving 1700 hours with the Pemaquid Watershed Association in Damariscotta. Welch is a 2009 graduate of Ithaca College where she studied Environmental Studies, Philosophy & Art History. She previously served in AmeriCorps as a Field Educator with the Southeast Alaska Guidance Association.

## **Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service**

Monday, January 17, 2011 was Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. Every year the MCC's Environmental Educators participate in the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service, helping to make MLK Day a day "on", not a day off.

This year, MCC EE's participated in a wide range of projects, including helping local children create salad and herb gardens for senior residents, providing after-school enrichment activities, and participating in several weatherization projects, including ones organized by the Maine AmeriCorps Alums group and fellow Maine AmeriCorps program the Island Institute.

MCC Environmental Educator Emily Ellingson planned an MLK Day project at her host site, Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens (CMBG). CMBG, in conjunction with The Lincoln Home in Newcastle and Coastal Kids Preschool in Damariscotta, hosted a Martin Luther King Jr. Day Service Project at The Lincoln Home on Friday January 14th, 2011 from 10 am to 11:30 am.

Residents of The Lincoln Home partnered with young students from the Coastal Kids Preschool to make healthy and educational salad and herb gardens for the residents of The Lincoln Home to enjoy. Over twenty preschoolers filled up their pots with soil and brought them to their tables to plant lettuce and herbs with aides and parents from Coastal Kids Preschool and about eight residents from The Lincoln Home. Everyone enjoyed an array of healthy snacks and drinks while they planned and planted their gardens.

The pots were left at the Lincoln Home to germinate and grow into salad gardens that they can harvest at a later date, hopefully with the students at Coastal Kids Preschool!



MCC EE Dee Clark helps a student with some planting



MCC EE's (in back wearing MCC shirts from L to R: Stewart DesMeules, Emily Ellingson, Dee Clark, Leo Maheu, Timothy Duclos & Becky Kolak) with Lincoln Home residents and students from Coastal Kids Preschool

## Recruitment

### Field Team

The Field Team is currently recruiting for 2011 season Team Leaders (**February 25, 2011 application deadline** and May 2, 2011 start date), and 2011 season Team Members (**April 1, 2011 application deadline** and May 17, 2011 start date for summer season).

Details about all of our 2011 Field Team positions can be found here:

<http://www.maine.gov/doc/parks/mcc/fto.htm>.

More information about the MCC's Field Team program can be found here:

<http://www.maine.gov/doc/parks/mcc/fieldteam.html>.



### Environmental Educators



The Environmental Educator program is currently recruiting for numerous 900 hour positions (approximately 6 months) starting May 23, 2011. The **application deadline is February 15, 2011** for positions starting in May. Current and past host sites include the Maine Department of Environmental Protection, Maine Bureau of Parks & Lands, and the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve.

Position descriptions and qualifications can be found here:

[http://www.maine.gov/doc/parks/mcc/EEO\\_000.htm](http://www.maine.gov/doc/parks/mcc/EEO_000.htm).

More information about the MCC Environmental Educator program can be

found here: <http://www.maine.gov/doc/parks/mcc/smeevl.html>.

## 2011 Trail Training Academy

On February 14, the MCC's 2011 Trail Training Academy will commence. This eleven-week training will be taught by Trail Training Instructor Erin Amadon and Outdoor Recreation Assistant Steven Gaffney, and will provide potential Team Leaders with a foundation in both trail work and team leading skills. Topics covered include chainsaw operation & safety, rigging, conflict resolution, meal planning, and Wilderness First Responder certification, among numerous others.



2010 Trail Trainers during chainsaw training last year

## February Networking Day

On February 15, all of the current Environmental Educators will be gathering at Camp Mechuwana in Winthrop for a day of brainstorming, team-building and networking. MCC Environmental Educators serve individually, so this is an opportunity for them to get together to share experiences, skills and ideas regarding their current service.

## Volunteers of the Month

### December

**Heidi Burden** of Portland, ME was nominated by MCC Environmental Educator Wendy Paterson for all of her hard work (and great spirit) during a volunteer day spent pulling the invasive species glossy buckthorn at the Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge in Wells. Burden's energy and enthusiasm were a great contribution to the project.

## **Volunteer Opportunities & Events**

MCC Environmental Educator Laura Keating is looking for volunteers to help out with her Winter Snowshoe program events at the Androscoggin Riverlands State Park on February 12, February 26 & March 12! Events are 10 am-1 pm.

Volunteers are needed to transport hot cocoa and snacks a mile into the park where the picnic meadow is located, join the group snowshoeing, or help with the kids activity at the picnic meadow.

Program themes are as follows:

Feb 12: Legends of the Riverlands

Feb 26: Riverlands Winter Greens

Mar 12: Winter Wildlife in the Park

The Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands and the Androscoggin Land Trust invite all groups and individuals to go on a guided snow shoe tour of one of Maine's newest state parks. They'll be holding an educational program each day for the kids and a longer tour for the outdoor enthusiasts. Please bring a pair of snowshoes and snacks for the journey.

Contact Laura at 207-557-0352 or [laura.keating@maine.gov](mailto:laura.keating@maine.gov) to learn more or sign up to help out!

## **Alumni**

### **Christy Monroe**

From 2001-2003, Christy Monroe served as the Community Emissary (a combination of trail crew volunteer coordinator and community outreach) at the Maine Conservation Corps. She was born and raised in Hope, Maine and holds a B.S. in Public Administration from the University of Maine. Monroe is currently the Program Coordinator for after-school and summer camp programs at Rockland Middle School. She serves as a member of the Materials Review Committee with Maine Family Planning and volunteers locally with programs that serve at-risk youth. She can be reached at [christy.monroe@gmail.com](mailto:christy.monroe@gmail.com).

**What initially drew you to the MCC?**

I met someone at school who told me about AmeriCorps and a position opening at MCC. It sounded fun and out of the box, so I jumped at the opportunity.

**What was your favorite part about serving with the MCC?**

The people. I worked closely with both the environmental educators and the trail crews in my position as Community Emissary. I loved the experience networking and getting to know community partners, program staff, and other AmeriCorps members. Some of my best friends today are people that I served alongside at MCC 10 years ago.

**What was your favorite project/favorite place you served?**

Going out on the trails to visit and work with the crews was definitely a favorite. A particular excursion to the backcountry of Nahmakanta wilderness comes to mind. I also really enjoyed bringing environmental education into Maine public schools.

**How did your time with the MCC affect your career/life path?**

So much of what I've experienced in my career thus far can be traced back to my MCC days. It gave me an introduction to office skills, State of Maine protocols, grant writing and management, team building, leadership, community service projects, working in the public school system, working with the media, event planning and management—the list goes on and on.

**If you could give any advice to current or future MCC members, what would it be?**

Take advantage of social and networking opportunities. From conferences, to potluck dinners—participating fully in Maine's AmeriCorps community will be well worth the effort.



Monroe and her daughter, Elizabeth, (a former MCC mascot and trail crew volunteer who had just turned 6 when her mom joined MCC) who is planning to join AmeriCorps or the Peace Corps ASAP.