



AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY
& THE ENVIRONMENT

March 2024



The Maine Academy of Natural Sciences

MeANS Community,

The weather has certainly taken a turn toward spring, and that always brightens the spirits!

Spring Intensives began yesterday and students will be studying Maple Sugaring, Alternative Energy, Animal Husbandry, and the Local Environment. The school is buzzing with projects and the coming and going of field trips. It's



always an exciting time.

We have launched our **"By All MeANS"** annual fundraising campaign and we hope you will consider making a donation. There is truly no gift too small and we deeply appreciate all those that give. This year, we will be using the funds to support our Intensive programs as well as the Ramsay Fifield Endowment. These programs benefit every MeANS student and need your support. Donating is easy and can be done online here: [DONATE NOW](#).

We are very exciting about our upcoming **MeANS Maple Sunday on March 24th**. We have collected over 300 gallons of sap and begun to boil in earnest. More information on the event is listed below. We hope to see you there!

As always, please reach out with any questions, concerns, or wild ideas!

Matt Newberg
Head of School
mnewberg@maineacademy.org
419-6451



[We need your support, please consider a donation!](#)

MeANS MAPLE SUNDAY

March 24th
12 to 3 p.m.

Come and celebrate the sweetest
season of all at the Maine
Academy of Natural Sciences!

- See how the syrup gets made on a student-led tour of our campus sugar shack!
- Try a free sample of syrup and ice cream!
- Buy some fresh maple donuts to enjoy!



382 Green Rd
Hinckley, ME 04944
maineacademy.org
(207) 419-6500



MeANS Celebrates Outdoor Learning at the State House

Over the past few years, we have made a tremendous push to put outdoor, hands-on learning at the forefront of learning at MeANS. From starting our Blacksmithing and Woodworking programs this year on campus, to offering regular immersive overnights and outdoor projects during our Natural Science "Intensives", MeANS has had the opportunity to collaborate with some incredible partners including the Maine Local Living School, the Maine Environmental Education Association, Lenox Lodge, and MOFGA.

On February 27th, these organizations along with a collection of public schools, politicians, and

representatives from the Maine Department of Education, had the opportunity to come together to celebrate Outdoor Learning in the state of Maine. Four brave MeANS students joined in, taking part in a panel, chatting with Representative Bruce White, and listening to the impact that outdoor learning is having on young people from across the state.

One of the events that was highlighted at the State House was the Maine Environmental Education Association Annual Conference, which we are excited to host for the first time at MeANS on May 10th and 11th. We hope to see you there!



2024-25 Enrollment is underway!

All current students are guaranteed a spot next year if they enroll by **March 29th**. This gives families two months to re-enroll for the 2024-25 school year before the school opens spots for new students and families.

Returning families click here:

<https://forms.gle/tXMbefuEUTvmcNHD6>

New families click here:

<https://airtable.com/appxyYP6dNEBEACt4/shr2jaiytENQG9PJJ>

If necessary, a public lottery will be held at 6:00pm, March 29th at the Moody School Building.

MEANS PRESENTS

OPEN HOUSE



4 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Feb. 29

Mar. 27

Apr. 25

May 29

- Light refreshments
- Student tours
- Meet the teachers
- Blacksmithing demo
- Q&A

Interested in
our school?
Come and
check us out!

Find us at:
maineacademy.org
13 Easler Rd
Hinckley, ME 04944

PAT'S PULSE

Coming together as a Community

Calling All Bakers!

The spring time is the beginning of a very busy stretch for the MeANS community. We're looking at (re)enrollment for the following year, working diligently through the spring intensives, prepping for one of our biggest public events, and all while inching closer and closer to graduation! It's no small task to plan and effectively run these events, so now I come to the greater MeANS family with a way to help make those events an even bigger success! If you, or someone you know, loves to bake then we would love some help in providing some baked



goods for our open houses (March 27th, April 25th, and May 29) and for MeANS Maple Sunday (March 24th). Making a good first impression not only helps with prospective students, but also helps the Central Maine community at large sing our praises. What better way to do that than with a table full of sweet treats? If you are interested in volunteering your time and baked goods, please reach out to me at phenyan@maineacademy.org or (207)419-7590. Thank you in advance! As always, thanks to our families for all that you do to support MeANS, and all you have done in the past to make our school the special place that it has come to be.

Pat Henyan
Assistant Head of School

We MeANS WELL

A wellness initiative to get you outdoors!

Incentivized program to reward you for logging your outside time.

Any outside time counts!!

Time in the outdoors connects you to your local communities, strengthens self confidence and feelings of mattering, creates long term healthy habits, lowers blood pressure, reduces anxiety, improves mood, and increases concentration for improved academic performance!!

Find the form to log your time on your advisory google classroom!!

15 hrs



30 hrs



40+ hrs





Threshold News

"Making the Most of MeANS' Campus"

Threshold Monday, March 11th , 2024.

As most of you are aware MeANS has one of the most amazing campuses in Maine. We have greenhouses, a sugar shack, a full-scale museum, blacksmithing and woodworking spaces, bee hives, a one acre farm, and a Yurt.

This past Monday our Threshold program was held on campus making use of three of these incredible facilities – our Sugar Shack, now in full syruping operation; the LC Bates Museum, and our blacksmithing space.

The day began with students meeting with their teachers in an advisory session then combining with another advisory to do an Itime activity which allowed students to meet and learn a little about the other students in the program. Because Threshold is a one on one home-based program, students don't have as much chance to be with peers as the Campus program.

We then dove into the morning's activities – a visit to the LC Bates museum and our very own Sugar Shack. The team that went to LC Bates were guided by Hannah and Deb Staber through the museum's unbelievably varied and interesting collections. We learned a little bit about how trees work, and the kinds of challenges they face both natural and man-made.

The Sugar Shack experience was led by Sugar Shack co-founder, creator, and implementer – Jeff Chase who helped to start MeANS way back in 2011. Jeff explained to us how climate change is affecting the Sugaring season, and how the chemistry of making the best Maple Syrup works. We learned that the Indigenous people who lived in Maine for thousands of years had figured out how to tap trees. We learned how much a 5 gallon bucket filled with sap weighs as we had to carry them back from the trees which were tapped near the Sugar Shack.

The afternoon brought further learning experiences. Jeff who founded and is the



driving force behind our blacksmithing program taught Threshold students what goes into heating iron and bending it. A few students actually had a whack at it. Working with hot iron one learns a lot about heat and flexibility and hand eye coordination. Other students participated in our Luddite club, drawing and decorating without the use of any electronic implements. Some took part in our improvisation workshop honing their theatric skills, and yet others were involved in making tasty maple syrup ice cream with our own maple syrup.

Could there be a sweeter ending to the day? We were exposed to biology, physics, history, anthropology, interpersonal communication, visual and performing arts all in one Threshold Monday. Next one – we could be witnessing the solar eclipse, April 8th . Stay tuned!

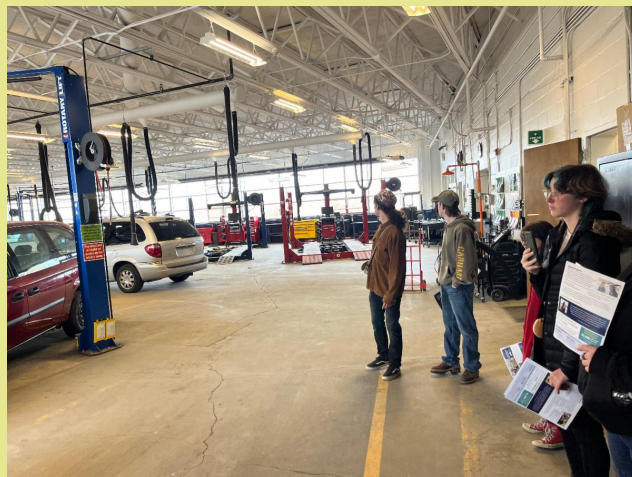




Evan's Curriculum Corner

MeANS College Visits

Over the past few weeks, Juniors and Seniors from MeANS have had the opportunity to attend a collection of informational sessions on campus including Husson University, Kennebec Valley Community College, and Southern Maine Community College. This past week, however, a devoted group hopped aboard our mini school bus and made their way to SMCC in South Portland to explore the incredible career paths available to them. From horticulture, to automotive technology, to welding, each student walked away with ideas for next steps, and a better sense of how attainable their career goals are. Stay tuned for our next college visits!



If you have questions about post secondary opportunities for your son or daughter, please reach out to our Director of Curriculum and Instruction at ecoleman@maineacademy.org



Monday Academic Support

We will continue to offer Monday Academic Support sessions on campus for students who want to catch up on work or need extra help. Threshold students are invited to attend in-person or remotely.

Limited transportation is available.

Students can sign up for 9:00 - 11:00 a.m., 1:00 - 3:00 p.m., or both!

Please email ecoleman@maineacademy.org if you are interested.

February's RINGER



The Ringer is a monthly award given to faculty and staff at the Maine Academy of Natural Sciences. It represents the individual's outstanding commitment to student growth.

February's recipient is Social Worker,
Grace Hilmer

Here is what her colleague's had to say:

"Throughout high school as my advisor, and now a fellow colleague - Grace has shown nothing short of support and guidance. Her joy is contagious and radiant - and thoughtfulness, admirable. She is always open to listen and help when needed, and advocate for those around her, students, colleagues and any community she sees fit. She is incredibly passionate to help her students. Her dedication to her profession is something I look up to. Grace is beyond deserving of this Ringer award!"

"I have had the pleasure of knowing Grace both when she was our office manager and as a classroom neighbor. She is always helping those around her, energetic, supportive, competitive, and a role model for our students and staff alike. Grace goes above and beyond for our MeANS community while somehow still having time to be a champion skier. I believe everyone should have a person like Grace in their life who will listen, give advice, and laugh with them. Much of what Grace does happens behind the scenes but what she does certainly does not go unnoticed!"

"As a school built on relationships, we are so incredibly fortunate to have a social worker who finds deep connections with the vast assortment of students that attend MeANS. Whether it's helping someone work through a conflict at home, encouraging them to have a difficult conversation with a friend, or pushing them outside of their comfort zone on a hike along the coast, Grace sees the potential within the members of our tight-knit community and helps them reach for it. This stands true for the adults in the building as well. All of us here have had tough days, and so often on those days, Grace goes out of her way to sit down, check in, and to make sure that you leave the building in a better place. Her boundless positivity, her enthusiasm for each little thing that we do at MeANS, and her love of working with young people, all make her essential to the fabric of this beautiful school we call home."





Can We? Project: Final Collaborative Retreat

For the final time this year, our Can We? Cohort pulled together to wrap up the first year of our deep dive into civic engagement and the revitalization of our democracy.

Back in November, our first retreat took place in our Yurt on campus where students had an opportunity to build community, share stories about their lives, and strengthen their understanding of our shared humanity.



In December, our cohort headed to the Augusta Civic Center, where they joined 14 other schools across the state to explore and discuss an array of challenging topics including gun control, abortion, and environmental protection (*If you're interested in learning more check out [this article on Maine Public Radio](#)*).

But for our final retreat, our brave cohort of 18 decided that they would like to take it on collaboratively, so we hopped on the bus and made our way to the Ecology Learning Center, where the two cohorts shared about their experiences and forged new bonds.

For the final retreat, the focus was on bringing these discussions into the present day, and students spent time working through a collection of new legislation currently being reviewed in the state of Maine. The conversations were lively, and student honed their skills as facilitators and discussion leaders as they worked through differences in opinion and decided the fate of a series of bills collectively.

It was an incredibly rewarding experience for both schools, and already students left the day brainstorming how we could continue this collaboration in the years ahead.

Up next, we're headed to the New England Youth Identity Summit in Portland Maine, on April



MARCH

by Emily Dickinson

We like March, his shoes are purple,
 He is new and high;
 Makes he mud for dog and peddler,
 Makes he forest dry;
 Knows the adder's tongue his coming,
 And begets her spot.
 Stands the sun so close and mighty
 That our minds are hot.
 News is he of all the others;
 Bold it were to die
 With the blue-birds buccaneering
 On his British sky.

Title I, ESEA DASHBOARD

To find out more about MeANS schoolwide Title I Program, a link to the ESEA Dashboard can be found here: [dashboard](#). For more information, please contact Title I Coordinator, Isabelle King at iking@maineacademy.org.

IMPORTANT DATES

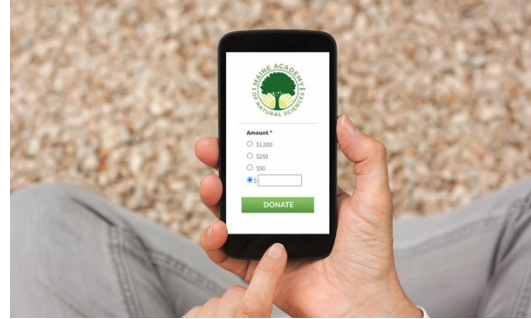
3/12 - 22 Intensives

3/24 MeANS Maple Sunday

3/27 Open House

4/8 Threshold Monday





DONATE NOW

Your tax-deductible donation helps us make a difference.

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Employment Opportunities

Come work for the "coolest school in the State of Maine!"

If you know someone looking for a rewarding opportunity, please encourage them to get in touch. If interested, visit our website for descriptions or contact our Business Manager, Ashley Hyde at 419-0503, ahyde@maineacademy.org maineacademy.org/about/employment/

School Nurse, Part-time

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