



NEWSLETTER

Summer 2024



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Camp Is Ready and the Kids Are Almost Here!

It's incredible, isn't it? Another year has flown by, and the anticipation for camp is electrifying. The scent of s'mores lingers in the air, igniting a sense of nostalgia and joy!

We are absolutely thrilled to be on the brink of welcoming our campers back. The overwhelming response this year, with a record-breaking 500 campers already signed up for our summer sessions, fills our hearts with boundless excitement and gratitude. It's shaping up to be an unforgettable summer of fun and adventure!

Now is the perfect moment to express our deepest gratitude to the countless volunteers and dedicated alumni who have poured their time and energy into preparing for camp. The truth is, it truly does take a village to create a safe and nurturing environment for our campers over the time they spend with us. To each and every one of you, our heartfelt thanks for your unwavering support and dedication. And let us not forget to honor our exceptional staff, whose unwavering commitment and tireless efforts year-round ensure that camp is a place of magic and wonder for all who step foot on its grounds.

Above all, we extend our sincerest appreciation to the parents who trust us to provide a transformative experience for their children at Agassiz Village. It is an honor and privilege to be entrusted with their care and growth as they embark on a journey of new friendships, skills, and self-discovery.

We welcome campers to a summer filled with endless possibilities and unforgettable memories!

Record Enrollment Leaves Waitlisted Kids Hoping for Chance to Attend Agassiz

One of the greatest needs for kids this time of year is summer programming. This is especially true for underserved children, who are not only more likely to fall behind their wealthier peers academically, but who also face the greatest risk to their well-being during the months that they are out of school.

Organizations that provide programming are seeing an influx of homeless and foster care children seeking enrollment. The sad truth is, however, that less than 2 percent of education funding in the United States is spent on out-of-school learning.

Agassiz Village is experiencing record enrollment this summer, with more than 500 families already applying for camp. While we fundraise all year long to support families needing financial assistance, our scholarships have been given out for the summer sessions. We are hopeful that we can assist those children who are now relegated to a waitlist through one last appeal. If we can just raise enough for fifty more campers, we will be able to welcome all those kids looking forward to coming to Agassiz for our summer sessions.

We are off to a good start, with 27 children receiving scholarships from our generous donors. But we still have a long way to go.

New T.H.R.I.V.E. Program Debuts This Summer

Exciting news this summer at Agassiz Village! We are thrilled to unveil our revamped program designed to empower teens for the journey ahead: the innovative T.H.R.I.V.E. Program.

Formerly known as the Teen Advancement Program and Leaders in Training Program, T.H.R.I.V.E. combines the best of both worlds to equip our teens with essential skills for success at camp and beyond. Our mission is to guide youth towards a bright future, and we believe this program will be a game-changer in preparing them for school, college, and the workforce.

What sets T.H.R.I.V.E. apart? Our teens are encouraged to step into leadership roles, inspiring the next generation of campers as counselors and program staff. Through engaging activities, they are nurtured to dream big, think creatively, and cultivate a growth mindset in a safe and inclusive environment built on respect and kindness.

The program's highlights include exciting opportunities like a multi-state hiking adventure, a peer-mentor program, college visits, internships, and a special "Dream Project" where teens support younger campers' aspirations. By focusing on helping teens ACT—**A**chieve goals, **C**onnect with others, and **T**hrive as individuals—T.H.R.I.V.E. ensures a holistic growth experience.

After completing the intensive three-week camp program, teens continue their journey with monthly workshops on career readiness, financial literacy, mentorship, and leadership development. These sessions offer invaluable insights from working professionals and a platform for personal growth and social-emotional learning.

The T.H.R.I.V.E. Program marks a significant milestone in our commitment to providing unparalleled summer experiences for underserved youth in New England. A heartfelt thank you to our dedicated Youth Experience & Development Director, Camile Naldini, and Camp Director, Dan Hanlon, for their tireless efforts in bringing this transformative program to life.

THE BUILDING BLOCKS FOR AGASSIZ CAMPER SUCCESS



Meet ThinkGive, Our New Educational Partner

We are also very excited to announce a new partnership with ThinkGive, a Boston-based nonprofit organization that provides a social and emotional learning (SEL) curriculum that helps students build character, confidence, and connection.

Since 1935, Agassiz Village has offered industry-leading programming that fosters the development of pro-social competencies in underserved children in an immersive residential recreational camp experience. In the last decade, we adapted a nationally recognized SEL curriculum that has allowed us to provide opportunities for kids to reflect on their growth over the course of their stay at camp.



Now, with ThinkGive, our Agassiz SEL Coordinator can lead additional activities that provide an opportunity for our campers to discuss important topics like empathy, inclusion, compassion, and bravery, and that will empower them to take action to effect positive change in their world.

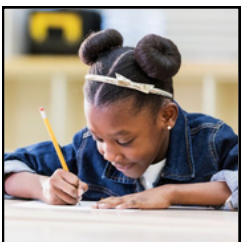
In addition, families of our campers will be able to continue their SEL programming at home through ThinkGive's online resources. We believe parents will be appreciative of these tools. ThinkGive students overwhelmingly report strong increases in feelings of belonging, self-esteem, connection, and empowerment.

"ThinkGive will help our campers discover they can be agents of positive change and inspire them to make a real and profound impact in our school and community. We are grateful for this partnership and are excited for our community to see its impact," says Agassiz Executive Director Lisa Carter.

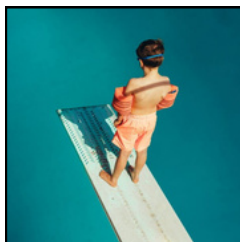
The need for programs like ThinkGive is stronger than ever because youth mental health has deteriorated nationwide. In May 2023, the Surgeon General declared loneliness, isolation, and lack of connection a new public health epidemic in the United States.

"One of ThinkGive's top strategic priorities is to expand access to our programming so that every student can access the SEL needed to develop their whole selves and promote emotional well-being," says Penny Austen, Executive Director of ThinkGive. "We are delighted to partner with Agassiz Village to bring ThinkGive to their program."

Sample ThinkGive SEL Activities



SEL ACTIVITY:
I Am a Poem
Grades: 3-6



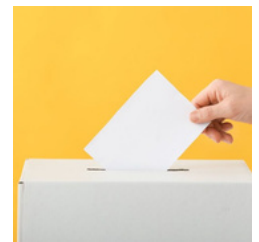
SEL ACTIVITY:
Try something New
Grades: 3-5



SEL ACTIVITY:
Who Do I Want to Be?
Grades: 6-8



SEL ACTIVITY:
Challenge a
Stereotype
Grades: 6-8



SEL ACTIVITY:
Cast a Vote for You
Grades: 6-8

2024 Volunteer Weekend a Great Success!



Dozens of alumni, friends of Agassiz, and community volunteers, including our neighbors from the Thompson Lake Environmental Association, spent Memorial Day weekend working hard at our Village campus in a final push to get much-needed tasks completed for the upcoming summer sessions.

The to-do list was long, but these troopers organized and tackled the list with gusto. From painting 25 picnic tables to landscaping throughout the property, and from installing appliances in the Medical Center to moving beds and bureaus into the cabins, these folk did it all. And we must say, they did it all with smiles.

Special thanks to everyone who participated and who spent their weekend helping us prepare Agassiz Village for this summer's campers. Our staff and counselors thank you as well for the newly refurbished workout center. We know moving that equipment was a chore!

We appreciate all of you so much!

Memorial Day Weekend 2025

Volunteer Weekend is always one of the most special times of the year at Agassiz. We welcome back former campers—many of whom spend the nights in their old cabins—and greet new friends and neighbors who have found us and want to help. If you or any of your family or friends want to join us for a weekend of fun, food, and hard work, mark your calendars for Memorial Day Weekend 2025.



The 2024 Task List (Partial)

- **Painting**
- **Removing tree limbs**
- **Clearing brush**
- **Building decks**
- **Moving furniture**
- **Setting up cabins**
- **Kitchen cleaning**
- **Replacing doors**
- **Redoing offices**
- **Installing appliances**
- **Landscaping**
- **And so much more!**

Corporate and Community Partners Help Out

Getting Agassiz Village ready for our summer sessions is a monumental task. While we have an incredible Facilities staff in Ryan, Vern, and Shep, 330 acres is a lot to cover for such a small group. Between broken tree limbs from storms, road and building repairs, cleanup of the grounds, setup of the cabins for campers, and gathering much-needed items for the kids, it takes months of preparation.

That's why we are always so appreciative of our many corporate and community partners who give their time and energy to helping us with major tasks. We couldn't do it without them. These volunteers put in hours at the camp, come rain or shine. Their devotion to the mission of Agassiz is truly inspiring.

The following groups came in during May and June to offer assistance or donate items to our cause. We send out our sincere thanks to them all for their support.

If you or your organization would like to help us in the spring or fall, please call our office. We are always looking for an extra pair of hands.

WE THANK YOU!



**AAA Northern
New England**



Machias Savings



**Rebuilding
Together L/A**



Walmart



CVS



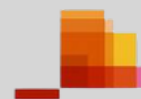
Deloitte



**Thompson Lake
Environmental
Association**



**New
Balance**



**Pricewaterhouse
Coopers**



L.L. Bean

Poland Historical Society Visits Agassiz Campus

Agassiz Village was honored to have hosted the Poland Historical Society over Memorial Day Weekend. Development Director Michael Smith provided a complete tour of the campus to ten members of the Society, which seeks to preserve and promote an interest in the history of Poland, Maine, where Agassiz Village is located.

Members were very interested to learn the history of Agassiz, including:

- In 1912, the land was set up for families as an overnight, reservation-only campground. In 1925, the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) bought the land and named it Camp Magua.
- Agassiz Village encompasses 330 acres of fields, hills, streams, and woodlands, with two miles of waterfront property on beautiful Thompson Lake. Squirrel Island, located a mile off-shore, is owned by the camp and affectionately known as Burroughs Island.
- The bell that is rung each morning by campers is from the USS Hammondsport, a World War II freighter that carried cargo and aircraft to beleaguered allied forces in the western Pacific

What we at Agassiz learned is that even in our hometown, there is much work to be done in informing residents and local businesses of our incredible, impactful, and life-changing work. Many of the members of the Society knew little of Agassiz and its purpose. Our goal for the coming year, and especially during our 90th Anniversary Celebration, is to share our legacy with our neighbors.



The Agassiz Village Dining Hall

Agassiz Village Development Director Michael Smith shares the history of the dining hall, originally known as the Elizabeth Cary Agassiz Dining Hall in honor of camp benefactor Maximillian Agassiz's grandmother.

Built in 1939, the dining hall is the largest free-standing log cabin in the Northeast. All the logs used in the building of the hall were taken from the woods of the Village. The first meal in the hall was served in July 1940.

The weathervane at the top of the hall features a newsboy and young street trader, a symbol of the Burroughs Newsboys Foundation and the camp's original purpose.

The Agassiz Village Gazebo

Members of the Poland Historical Society stroll the campus at Agassiz Village. In the background is the Village's iconic gazebo, which once housed a huge merry-go-round with a Wurlitzer band organ that founder Harry E. Burroughs purchased from Barnum & Bailey Circus in 1936 for the Agassiz boys.

Burroughs insisted on having the merry-go-round because he never forgot the envy he experienced as a child while walking along Revere Beach and not being able to afford a ticket to ride the merry-go-round there.



Lisa Carter Receives Top Nonprofit Recognition

Agassiz Village's Executive Director Honored for Excellence in Leadership

We are so thrilled—and proud—to announce that Lisa Carter, our executive director, was named a 2024 Nonprofit Excellence Awards Top 5 finalist by the Massachusetts Nonprofit Network. The Awards honor the most innovative and creative work being done by nonprofits across the state.

This recognition of Lisa comes as no surprise to Agassiz's Board of Directors and staff. Since joining in 2020, Lisa has exponentially redefined the future of Agassiz Village and its impact on the children we humbly serve. By quickly identifying the most pressing issues affecting the sustainability of the organization, she created a new strategy and vision for the future.

And she did it by weathering some pretty substantial storms along the way. Just as Lisa began work at Agassiz, COVID hit, and she suddenly had to deal with ceasing summer camp operations and the subsequent halt in funding. What did she do? She innovated, creating a virtual camp, with virtual fundraising events to get through the difficult time.



Lisa Carter (third from left) celebrates with members of Agassiz's Board of Directors during the Nonprofit Network Awards Ceremony held June 12, 2024, in Boston.

In addition, she simultaneously addressed the condition of the camp's aging facilities, ultimately securing a donation for a facility assessment to fully understand what she faced. The report forced Agassiz to tear down five buildings, overhaul the electrical system, and make major repairs before the camp could safely welcome kids again. Lisa collaborated with the staff, the Board, and the community to galvanize their support to positively turn around Agassiz.

"Lisa has infectious energy and enthusiasm which filters to everyone around her," says Theresa O'Bryant, President of the Agassiz Village Board of Directors. "This is important because there is so much to do with such a small staff and a volunteer board who can easily get exhausted."

In addition, Lisa revamped Agassiz's summer program and launched a new year-round program supporting teens, creating clear and measurable outcomes that have significantly made an impact on the success of the youth in the program.

"The youth we serve inspire me every day to work hard to make Agassiz Village the most special place in New England for youth from underserved communities," says Lisa. "We have accomplished a lot in four short years, and I am honored to be among such a prestigious group of colleagues recognized for their nonprofit leadership in Massachusetts."

Under Lisa's leadership, more transformation is coming to the camp. Agassiz Village is preparing to launch an \$8 million capital campaign to raise the funds needed to renovate the facilities.

We at Agassiz recognize that the impact Lisa has had on Agassiz Village is immeasurable—and we are so happy that the nonprofit world now knows of her extraordinary talent. She is gifted at galvanizing people to the Agassiz cause, especially bringing in outside entities, helping them understand the mission and need, and finding a way for them to participate in a meaningful way.

The ultimate benefactors of all Lisa's passion and perseverance are, of course, our kids.

We're Gearing Up for Some Awesome Events!

We have some exciting events coming up in the next few months, so be sure to mark your calendars and stay tuned our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/AgassizVillage) and website (www.agassizvillage.org)!

Agassiz Village 2024 Golf Outing



Monday, August 19,
Woodlands Golf Club,
Auburndale, MA
9:00 A.M. Registration
11:30 A.M. Shotgun Start

Saturday, September 7
Gore Place
Waltham MA
5:00-9:00 P.M.
Complimentary Happy Hour
5:00-6:00 P.M.

13th Annual Maine Course Event



CELEBRATING
**90th Anniversary
Celebration Kickoff**
Coming in August
Follow us on Facebook
for Updates
AGASSIZ VILLAGE
YEARS



Last Chance for Custom Thompson Lake Sea Bags

Our partnership with Sea Bags has yielded fantastic results! More than 60 of the custom-made Thompson Lake bags we designed have been bought by local residents and friends of Agassiz Village. That's about \$15,000 raised, with all proceeds going to scholarships for campers. Thanks to all who purchased a bag in support of our kids!

There is still time left to order your own Sea Bag. We will be running our promotion until July 5. The large tote is \$250, and the medium tote is \$225. You can have it shipped directly to your home (shipping fee added) or stop by Agassiz Village to pick it up when they are delivered.

These one-of-a-kind bags are perfect for summer excursions, holidays, birthday, and special occasions. Order yours today!



image of tag inside

The "Thompson Lake" Sea Bag

To order, go to www.agassizvillage.org/seabags.



Agassiz Village is a nonprofit organization that provides opportunities for children in underserved communities from New England to discover interests, uncover new skills, make lifetime friendships, and connect with inspiring mentors at our overnight camp in Poland, Maine. The skills kids learn at camp and through our year-round teen program, help campers thrive in school, college, and beyond.

Headquarters: 9 Vernon Street, Framingham, Massachusetts 01701

Summer Camp: 71 Agassiz Village Road, Poland, Maine 04274

Telephone: 781-860-0200