



NEWSLETTER



Hiking and Healing at Mountain Lake Academy

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ADMISSIONS

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Mountain Lake Academy is a therapeutically driven educational community which serves to meet the needs of our students, empowers them to be leaders, and helps them transition back to their home communities with an expanded growth mindset.

Ages 12-21, grades 7-12.



We stepped out of the forest and walked across the frozen river. Our snowshoes bit into the packed trail and crunched with each step.

“Stop,” I instructed. The two students paused behind me.

“Listen,” I said and pointed below our feet. A low rolling could be heard, like the beginning of a rainstorm. But the Winter sky above was clear.

“What is that?” One of the students asked.

“That’s the water. You can hear it, but you can’t see it,” I explained. The students nodded and we stood in silence, with our heads tilted towards the ice.

Students at Mountain Lake Academy are surrounded by six million acres of Adirondack Park. It’s a national playground for outdoor adventurers and we’re proud to call it our backyard. The traditional homeland of the Haudenosaunee,

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EXPLORING THE ADIRONDACKS

the People of the Longhouse were heavily deforested after the American Civil War to aid in the reconstruction efforts of the south.

It was during this time a few voices emerged, advocating for the protection of the forest because its health impacted the Hudson River and all those who lived in New York City dependent on its water. There was also a growing movement of writers, artists, doctors, and spiritual leaders who wrote, painted, talked, and preached about the healing power of wild spaces and organized efforts to save them.

Hence, Adirondack Park was created in 1892 for, “the free use of all the people for their health and pleasure.”

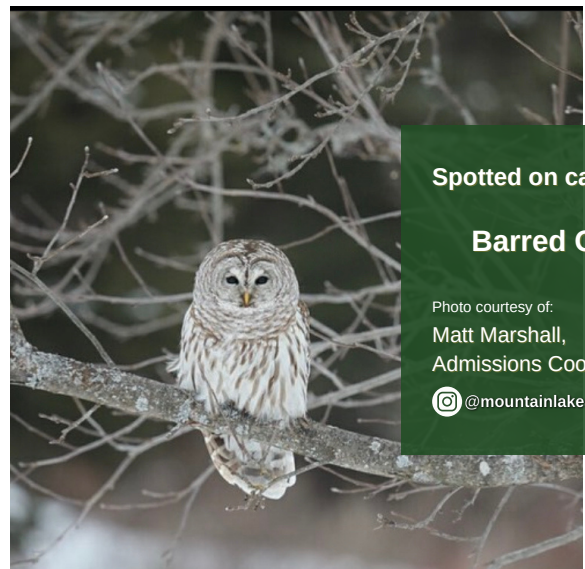
We crossed the river and continued to hike on a truck trail that led to Marcy Dam. Or more accurately what was left of it. In 2011, the heavy rain of Hurricane Irene caused severe flooding that blew out the dam and multiple landslides that tore down the mountain’s sides. The act of nature changed the landscape, very much like events in one’s life can change our thoughts, beliefs, hopes, and fears. For the Marcy Dam area, the landscape was altered, but over time healed. It was never the same, it became something different.

That’s what healing is. Transformation.

The students looked towards Mount Colden. Snow covered the slides and the summit was hidden by low clouds. We stood there in silence.

By exploring the Adirondacks at Mountain Lake Academy, we explore ourselves. We are challenged to look beneath our layers, to pause on the surface of our metaphorical ice, and reflect on what runs under it. Trauma, pain, anger, joy, resilience.


Spring has now taken the place of winter and slowly the ice is melting. It takes time. It takes perseverance. It takes hope. Hope that the days will warm and the sun will shine. That’s what we do our best to offer and remind our students at Mountain Lake Academy. Winters in the Adirondacks are long, but Spring will come.



Spotted on campus!

Barred Owl

Photo courtesy of
Matt Marshall,
Admissions Coordinator

 @mountainlakeacademy