

LIFE-CHANGING LEARNING IN NATURE

FOR HIGH SCHOOL
JUNIORS AND SENIORS

MAINE
COAST
SEMESTER
at CHEWONKI



APPLY NOW FOR FALL '24, AND SPRING '25

YOU SHOULD GO!

"I LEARNED WHAT A POSITIVE AND INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY REALLY IS, AND I GAINED A MUCH DEEPER APPRECIATION FOR THE NATURAL WORLD. I PUSHED MYSELF ACADEMICALLY THROUGH THE SMALL CLASS SIZES AND HANDS-ON LEARNING."



LOCATION

The rugged coast of Maine is a legendary source of inspiration. It was here that Rachel Carson reveled in walks with her nephew, Roger, writing for all time, *"If I had influence with the good fairy...I should ask that her gift to each child in the world be a sense of wonder so indestructible that it would last throughout life..."* Our 400-acre campus on the coast of Maine provides many unique ecological zones to study and serves as a launchpad for you to explore the forests, rivers, shores, and mountains of this unique and beautiful place.

CLASSES

Maine Coast Semester offers field labs, backcountry expeditions, and entire classes you could never find at home. While books offer windows into new worlds, so do boots and binoculars, journals and journeys. You will learn to read the natural landscape, connect the dots between human and natural systems, and use that learning to engage in the local and global issues that matter most.

EXPERIENCES

You will be challenged and supported to learn and grow as you master outdoor living skills, learn to live communally in a wood-heated cabin, hike and paddle the woods and waters of Maine, work on an organic farm, become proficient in taking care of the natural and built environments around you, and channel your discoveries into a human ecology capstone project.

COMMUNITY & VALUES

We value taking responsibility for our actions as we take care of our place and each other. We offer the space and



THE PLACE YOU FIND YOUR WORLD IN

"I FOUND SO MUCH JOY, CLARITY, AND EXCITEMENT IN EDUCATION WHILE AT CHEWONKI, AND IT TRULY HELPED ME HONE MY ACADEMIC SKILLS, APPRECIATION FOR THE NATURAL WORLD, AND MY ABILITY TO EMPATHIZE, AND FORGE UNBREAKABLE BONDS AND FRIENDSHIPS. MAINE COAST SEMESTER HELPED ME DEVELOP IN SO MANY MULTI-FACETED WAYS."

structure for you and your Semester to become a microcosm of the community we want to see and to be in the world, with an emphasis on appreciating diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice. **You will learn that showing up matters, you matter, and together, we can make a positive difference.**

IT MATTERS WHAT WE DO

Maine Coast Semester classes will challenge and inspire you in ways you've never imagined. With every subject taught at an honors level, academic rigor is endemic to our program. Your thoughts will leave the page as you engage in meaningful dialogue with a dedicated and passionate faculty. You will become an active participant and player in the world of ideas alongside your peers. You may find yourself modeling tidal changes in math class, grappling with social justice issues, or working with your cabin mates to re-define your impact on climate change.

OUR GOALS FOR GRADUATES

We work to manifest our mission to inspire transformative growth, teach appreciation and stewardship of the natural world, and challenge people to build thriving, sustainable communities throughout their lives.

Our Goals for Graduates were crafted using the lens of diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice, giving students the opportunity to develop empathy

ENGAGED LEARNING

Students learn in a holistic way and address complex issues with humility, critical thinking, and creativity.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

As responsible community members, students intentionally engage with a breadth of perspectives to promote social and environmental justice within and across communities.

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Students listen with openness and discernment and communicate ideas with clarity, creativity, and an awareness of impact.

SENSE OF PLACE

Students build an understanding of their reciprocal relationship with the natural world through focused observation and reflection.

SENSE OF SELF

Students explore and affirm their identities, strengths, and areas for growth, and understand how these impact the various communities of which they are a part.



MEET A FEW TEACHERS

SARAH REBICK

Co-Director and Dean of Academics



"The stories we tell inform how we see our place in the world and guide how we live our lives."

ABOUT SARAH

Teaches English & Environmental Issues

Education

M.A. in English, Middlebury College

B.A. in Environmental Studies & U.S. Policy, Middlebury College

Interests

Running, knitting, books, rescue dogs, learning about people and culture

JULIE BARNES

Co-Director Dean of Students



"Our programs and their evolution fuel my belief that how we welcome one another into community has an impact on our capacity to live into our full potential."

ABOUT JULIE

Teaches World Religions & the Wilderness, oversees our backcountry curriculum and manages all aspects of student life.

Education

M.A. in Divinity and Spirituality, Graduate Theological Union, San Francisco Theological Seminary

B.A. in Anthropology, Bowdoin College

Interests

Creating community, playing with her daughters, rites of passage, and backcountry outings

ANDREW HUNTER

History and Social Sciences Teacher



"I believe stories are how we make sense of ourselves and the world around us, which is why hearing many perspectives is so important."

ABOUT ANDREW

Teaches History and Social Sciences

Education

M.A.T. in Political Science and Political Philosophy, Tufts University

B.A. in Political Science, Tufts University

Interests

Road tripping in my van, enjoying New England's seasons, following Boston sports, reading informational plaques



WHAT IS HUMAN ECOLOGY?

Human Ecology is the study of the relationship between humans and the natural world. We believe human ecology is a meaningful framework to understand the ways in which we interact with and change the natural world and vice versa. We use this framework throughout our programming. On a typical day, a student might discuss ecosystem services provided by salt marshes in natural history class, consider the ethics and environmental impacts surrounding food supply chains while harvesting potatoes on the farm, and lead a school meeting about Indigenous land acknowledgments.



MAINE COAST SEMESTER CAPSTONE IN HUMAN ECOLOGY

The Capstone challenges students to synthesize their semester learning and provides a structure to transfer it to their home communities to solve a real world problem. Designed to develop the skills and dispositions of our Goals for Graduates, students draw content and inspiration from seminars in Farm & Food and Energy Systems; explorations of natural and human landscapes and stories in classes; and guest speakers at the forefront of human ecology issues. Led by dedicated faculty, students complete community profiles using digital sources and interviews, reflect on their passions and learnings, and present a portfolio and plan for action at semester's end.

HUMAN ECOLOGY





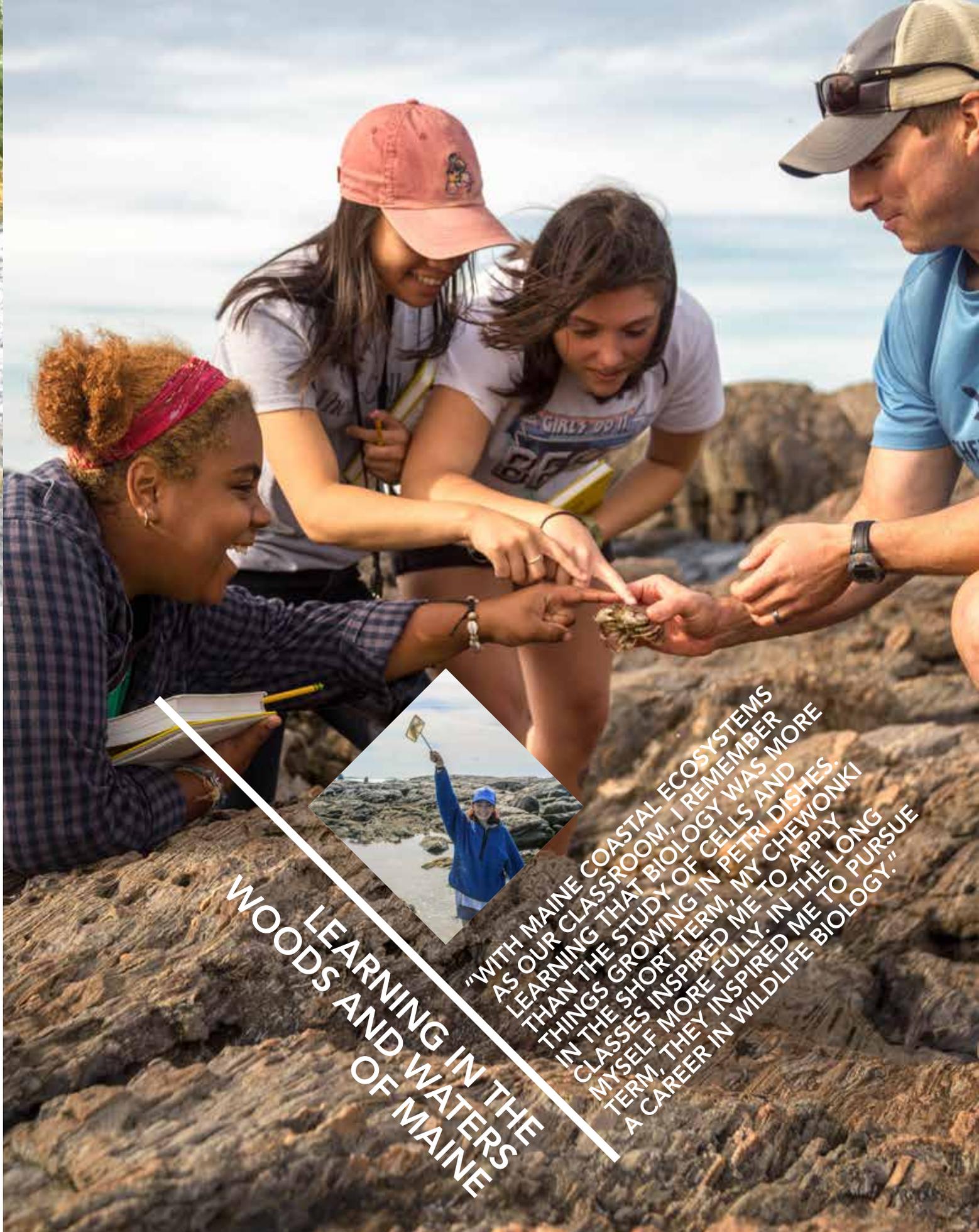
SCIENCE FIELD LABS



Integrated into all parts of Maine Coast Semester is a scientific mindset of asking questions and posing hypotheses, collecting relevant information, analyzing that information, and then forming conclusions and actions, which then lead to new questions!



Going to school in one of the world's most beautiful and diverse natural landscapes cultivates the habit of paying attention. Our signature science course, Natural History and Ecology of the Maine Coast, gets you out in the field at least four hours each week to directly observe habitats from rocky and sandy shores, to zones where rivers meet the sea, to upland forests—from Pemaquid Point to the Damariscotta Mills Fish Ladder to Morse Mountain. You'll learn to identify species by touch, smell, sight, and sound—not just from reading about them in a textbook. You will start to understand how species are distributed across ecological zones and how they interact with each other. Whether you go on to pursue science or any other profession, you will develop powers of observation and a sense of wonder that will serve you well for life.



LEARNING IN THE
WOODS AND WATERS
OF MAINE



"WITH MAINE COASTAL ECOSYSTEMS AS OUR CLASSROOM, I REMEMBER MORE THAN THE STUDY OF CELLS AND THINGS GROWING IN PETRI DISHES. IN THE SHORT TERM, MY CHEWONKI CLASSES INSPIRED ME TO APPLY MYSELF MORE FULLY. IN THE LONG TERM, THEY INSPIRED ME TO PURSUE A CAREER IN WILDLIFE BIOLOGY."



THE POWER OF COMMUNITY

"I'VE NEVER BEEN WITH A GROUP OF KIDS MORE ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT GOING ON A SPONTANEOUS WALK. TOGETHER, WE WENT MUD SLIDING IN THE SALT MARSH, CAVE HUNTING ON BLUEBERRY HILL, POLAR-BEARING IN FEBRUARY WATERS, AND NIGHT WALKING ALONG THE NECK WITHOUT FLASHLIGHTS. THE FERVOR OF MAINE COAST SEMESTER STUDENTS IS SIMPLY ASTOUNDING."

ELISABETH WARD Winnetka, IL, The Hotchkiss School
Brown University

We celebrate the uniqueness of all individuals and we cherish communities as a powerful force for growth and change. Both on campus and out in the world, Maine Coast Semester students learn to function as part of something bigger than themselves, contributing their efforts toward a shared goal.

Community on Campus

Many Maine Coast Semester graduates will tell you they developed the deepest friendships of their lives here. Living in a small cabin with other students, working together to chop the wood that warms you and gather the food that sustains you—these experiences create strong bonds of respect and caring.

Connections to Community Through Service

We are deeply committed to using the strength of the Chewonki community to benefit the towns around us. During your Maine Coast Semester you'll help in a number of ways—delivering wood to help local families heat their homes, conducting energy audits, or repairing fences at a community garden. Through a local farm-to-food pantry program, you'll participate in the national food security movement, helping to increase the number of people in the area with access to healthy, nutritious food.

"I MILKED COWS, PICKED VEGETABLES, CLEANED UP THE DINING HALL, FINISHED A NEW CABIN, AND HELPED INSTALL A SPECIAL BICYCLE USED TO GENERATE ELECTRICITY. BEST OF ALL, I FOUND MY PASSION: STUDYING MARINE BIOLOGY."



SUSTAINABLE LIVING ON THE COAST OF MAINE

Sustainability—meeting the needs of the present generation while preserving the ability of future generations to meet their needs—is a core part of our mission. You will learn about sustainability and you will live it every day. You'll split wood to heat your cabin, turn compost, and care for the animals that work for and feed you. You'll join thoughtful dialogues about how each of us impacts the natural environment and how we can work toward meaningful change through advocacy and leadership.



Our 400-acre campus, located on a saltwater peninsula named Chewonki Neck, is also home to our farm, challenge course, and miles of forested trails.



OUTDOOR LEADERSHIP

BACKCOUNTRY EXPEDITIONS

Guided by outdoor educators and faculty, students immerse in outdoor learning landscapes that include Maine's wildest rivers, northern forests and trails, and rocky coast. Expeditions are 4-5 days, tied to seasons, and appropriate for all skill levels.



SOLOS

One of the most profound experiences we offer is a Solo, the opportunity to spend 48 hours alone in the forest. After extensive preparation, solos are a chance for deep self-reflection and to experience the tranquil peace of the natural world.



OUTDOOR LIVING SKILLS

Weekend programming is designed to develop habits of leadership (communication, reading landscapes and weather, respecting place and people) and concrete skills that include wood processing, tying knots, baking over a fire, setting up shelter and sleeping outdoors, and navigating with map and compass.



WILDERNESS FIRST AID

Health and safety are a prerequisite for venturing off the beaten path. Every Maine Coast Semester student goes through an accredited Wilderness First Aid course, preparing you for back-country living and travel.



CHALLENGE COURSE TRAINING

We use our 18-element high-and-low Challenge Course to teach a mix of technical climbing and leadership development skills. Anyone can climb a mountain, but do you have what it takes to lead a team to the other side?



"EDUCATION, IF IT MEANS ANYTHING, SHOULD NOT TAKE PEOPLE AWAY FROM THE LAND, BUT INSTILL IN THEM EVEN MORE RESPECT FOR IT, BECAUSE EDUCATED PEOPLE ARE IN A POSITION TO UNDERSTAND WHAT IS BEING LOST. THE FUTURE OF THE PLANET CONCERNS ALL OF US, AND ALL OF US SHOULD DO WHAT WE CAN TO PROTECT IT."

-WANGARI MAATHAI



Important numbers

3:1 Student to faculty ratio

5.5 Required course load

8 Average number of students per class

21 Academic classes offered

17 Average number of years' teaching experience per faculty member

99 Percent of Maine Coast Semester students who go on to 4-year colleges

45 Students per semester

11 Faculty, and 4 Teaching Fellows, plus 35 additional Chewonki support staff

90 Percent of faculty hold an advanced degree, or are pursuing a graduate degree



Expectations for work in and out of the classroom are high. You'll receive three to four hours of engaging outside work each day, with significant reading, problem sets, or writing, depending on the class.

"I SAW MY ADVISOR ALL THE TIME— IN WEEKLY MEETINGS, AT MEALS, DURING WORK PROGRAM, ON WILDERNESS TRIPS, AROUND CAMPUS—AND SHE GAVE ME TONS OF HELPFUL ADVICE ABOUT HOW TO BALANCE MY SCHOOLWORK WITH EVERYTHING ELSE CHEWONKI HAS TO OFFER."

ADRIANE BERRY Wiscasset, ME, Wiscasset High School
Bowdoin College

Class options*

*All classes are taught at Honors level

Science Natural History and Ecology of the Maine Coast

English Literature and the Land

History/Social Science U.S. History
AP® U.S. History

Mathematics Algebra II
Precalculus
Intro to Calculus
AP® Calculus AB
AP® Calculus BC

World Languages French: Intermediate, Advanced
Spanish: Intermediate, Advanced
Chinese: Intermediate, Advanced

Studio Arts Art and the Natural World

Interdisciplinary Maine Coast Semester Capstone in Human Ecology
Environmental Issues
World Religions and the Wilderness Sustainability Seminar
Community Service and Work Program

Physical Education Backcountry Expeditions and Outdoor Education

WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR? APPLY TODAY!

To begin your application visit:
mainecoastsemester.org

ADMISSIONS PROCESS

We seek students who are looking for an exciting and challenging experience, thriving at their own schools, and ready to seek new ways of learning for themselves and new ways to contribute to others. Maine Coast Semester at Chewonki is not for everyone. Students who enroll here—high school juniors and seniors from a diverse array of communities across the country—are self-directed, motivated, enthusiastic, and joyful. In selecting students, we review personal essays, academic records, a parent questionnaire, and two teacher recommendations.

ADMISSIONS TIMELINE

Fall and Winter
Learn about Maine Coast Semester at Chewonki

Mid-February
Admissions application and financial aid application due for both semesters (visit mainecoastsemester.org for an exact date)

Mid-March
Admissions decisions and financial aid awards mailed

Late August
Fall semester begins

Late January
Spring semester begins

ACCREDITATION

We are accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, and approved by the State of Maine Department of Education.

COLLEGE PREP

An important part of any junior year, college prep is woven into the fabric of Maine Coast Semester, with the vast majority of our alumni matriculating at top-tier colleges. Students often use essays focused on their experience at Chewonki and recommendations from our faculty as part of their college application. Students can take standardized tests as well as AP® exams while enrolled.

FINANCIAL AID

We are committed to enrolling a talented and diverse student body and to providing access to a Maine Coast Semester experience to as many students as possible. To that end, we are eager to share in the cost of education for families with demonstrated financial need. Every financial aid request is carefully considered with priority given to families who apply by the February application deadline. In an average year, 40% of students receive financial aid. Please contact the admissions office for more information.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Maine Coast Semester at Chewonki welcomes students of any race, color, gender, gender-expression, sexual orientation, religion, creed, ancestry, national origin, or disability, to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to our students.

LOCATION

Chewonki is located in Wiscasset, Maine.

"If I had to sum up the appeal of students who have gone through the Chewonki semester program, it sends the signal to an Admissions Committee, both a spirit of adventure and a commitment to self-reliance. Adventure because it is typically a radical change from what the young person has been used to in their own school environment, and self-reliance because of the outings component and the emphasis on sustainability. Away from the trappings of urban and suburban life, Chewonki provides a space and location for students to explore their values and character, experience genuine community, and take stock of their lives."

- Seth Allen, VP and Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid, Pomona College



MAINE COAST SEMESTER

at CHEWONKI

