

# Summer '24



- ▶ AIO T-SHIRTS ARE AVAILABLE FOR \$30. PURCHASE ONE ANYTIME DURING THE SESSION. PRE-PURCHASED SHIRTS WILL BE READY WHEN YOU ARRIVE.
- ▶ PLEASE MAKE SURE THAT ALL TEACHER RECOMMENDATIONS AND HEALTH FORMS ARE IN.
- ▶ HAVE YOU HEARD ABOUT AIO'S FLORIDA EXPLORATION PROGRAM THIS NOVEMBER? STUDENTS 14 YEARS AND OLDER CAN ATTEND AN ORIENTATION AND REGISTER AFTER THEIR SESSION.

**AIO BEGINS ITS 50TH SUMMER!**



## Our Students Hail from Around the World Welcome Summer

This is a big year for AIO! To celebrate our 50th Anniversary season we challenged former students to create an original design. We received excellent submissions and selected two: Our anniversary T-shirt is by Maya Sala. And our drinking glass features an intricate design by Natalia Sawicka. We are also hosting special presentations by alums of the program, and the summer concludes with a celebratory reunion for AIO alumni and families on Aug. 17 - 18.

On a personal note, I look forward to getting back to the whale watches, tidal pools, water testing, beach profiles, and college tours! After publishing the crab survey data that students have been collecting for several years, our staff are now compiling data from the Somes Sound survey and beach profiles to document changes in the Gulf of Maine over these past 50 years.

*2024 registrations show students from:*

*Alaska, Alabama, Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Washington DC, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Massachusetts, Maryland, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Vermont, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, AUSTRALIA, SWEDEN, THE UNITED KINGDOM AND CANADA!*

**We welcome one and all!**



## Travel Odds & Ends

Most airlines consider those under 15 years of age “unaccompanied minors.” Please pay any fees to the airline in advance and send the receipts so the airline doesn’t double charge. Also, plan for luggage fees. If the student isn’t traveling as an unaccompanied minor, you can check them in online the night before the flight and pay the luggage fees then. I will contact all of those flying in to confirm the time and the contact information for the staff member meeting them at the airport (for unaccompanied minors).





# A Few Last Minute Reminders

nurse and cook can prepare for any accommodations. Bring prescribed medications in their original bottles and don't bring over the counter medications unless you need something special. Our clinic is well stocked. All students will meet with our nurse, Pam, the first day and she will store and dispense all medications except those needed for life threatening emergencies (epi pen or inhaler).

- You are welcome to bring your own snacks (non-perishable) that will be stored in bins outside the dorms to eat during free time. We will stop for ice cream, do laundry (during 2 week sessions) and take a trip to Bar Harbor after you do your laundry on Saturday so you'll want spending money. Parents have the option of putting money into an "account" for their child for these items. You'll receive an e-mail with instructions on how to add

money. We also offer some cool AIO merchandise which you can pre-purchase or let your child choose themselves with money from their account. We ask that no money is kept in the dorms.

- A water bottle is needed for hikes and to keep by your bed. We encourage you to drink lots of water and cut plastic waste, too.

- Contact me if you will need to be picked up at an airport or bus station in either Bar Harbor or Bangor. Confirm all flights and bus schedules in advance and inform us of any changes. Delta, United, American and Allegiant Airlines serve Bangor. Cape Air (JetBlue) serves Bar Harbor.



- Students should arrive between noon and 5 pm on the first Sunday of their session and plan to depart on Friday by noon. If you're being picked up and have time, we're holding a family cookout from 11:30-12:30 pm on departure day. **NOTE: AIO opens at noon on the Sunday arrival day. DO NOT drop your child before noon since staff are off duty until that time. Plan your travel accordingly.**

- We need all health forms prior to the start of the session so the

## DRIVING DIRECTIONS

We would like to provide an alternate route to our site. **NOTE: This bypasses Bar Harbor.** You can reach the island two different ways: A) follow I-95 north to Augusta and exit onto route 3 or B) follow I-95 north to Bangor then take 395 to route 1A towards Bar Harbor. 1A will go into Ellsworth and rejoin route 3. Stay on route 3 until you cross two small bridges, which will take you onto Mt. Desert Island (from the corner of Rte. 1 and 3 in Ellsworth to the bridges will take approximately 20 minutes, depending on traffic). You will have passed a small visitor center on the right just as you drive onto the island. You may want to stop here and pick up a map of the island. Soon after that, route 3 will go to the left and routes 102 and 198 will go straight. Continue **straight** on 102 and 198: going to the left on Rte. 3 will take you into Bar Harbor (**and significantly longer due to traffic**). When you reach the island's only traffic lights, 102 and 198 will split and you will turn **left** onto 198. Stay on 198 until you see the junction of route 3 (198 will continue into Northeast Harbor-- do not go this way (Turn left to AIO). You will enter Seal Harbor in about 3 miles and pass the harbor on the right. Just past the harbor the road turns either right or left. You turn left, staying on route 3. You will go through the town of Seal Harbor and continue up the hill towards Bar Harbor. You will make the **second left** after you leave Seal Harbor, which is **Lower Dunbar Rd.** We are the large schoolhouse on the right. Our sign will be out front and the phone number is **207-276-9364**. Pull up to the front of the building and our staff will be there to direct you for drop off. PLEASE don't turn around in our neighbor's driveways or dirt roads.

*As you plan your travel, please be sure you have the correct dates. They are: June 16-21 (Introductory), June 23-July 5 (Intermediate), July 7-19 (Advanced), July 21-August 2 (Advanced), and August 4-16 (Intermediate).*



## MAIL & PHONE



There is one phone available for incoming and outgoing calls. Students may be reached during free time (1-2pm, 5-6pm & 9:15-9:55pm) but will not be released from an activity unless there is an emergency. **NO CELL PHONES, ELECTRONICS or ANYTHING THE CONNECTS TO THE INTERNET ARE ALLOWED**

**Students & Staff**  
**207-276-9364**

**Director**  
**800-375-0058**  
**207-276-9825**

**Nurse**  
**pamelashelp@aol.com**  
**207-632-1012**

Send all letters and packages to:  
**Student's Name**  
**c/o AIO**  
**9 Lower Dunbar Rd.**  
**P.O. Box 285**  
**Seal Harbor, ME 04675**

Care packages are welcome, however, we ask that you leave gum at home. Also, please don't send last minute packages since they often arrive after the student has left.





# MEET the 2024 AIO STAFF

**Sheryl Christy Gilmore**, Executive Director and Owner of AIO, begins her 41st season. For 15 years, Sherry taught and directed environmental education programs in southern Maine. She received her B.A. & teaching certification from Kalamazoo College in Michigan. Other experiences include classroom teaching, teacher training and teaching marine biology on a 101 ft. sailing ship in Puget Sound. Sherry has taught marine science in the local schools, written curriculum for classroom teachers, and offered workshops to bring the outdoor into classrooms well before it was fashionable. She is PADI certified and developed and runs AIO's Tropical programs and the Florida Career program. She has recently been working with the Ocean Conservancy to encourage Congress to stay focused on important ocean issues. Her other interests include marine mammals, coastal ecology, traveling and her family.

**Jim Gilmore**, Associate Director/Co-Owner of AIO, is Professor of Cinematic Arts and Visiting Filmmaker at Flagler College in St. Augustine, FL. Previously, he was Clinical Professor of Journalism & Screen Studies at the University of Michigan-Dearborn, where he taught courses in media production, documentary and photojournalism. For 33 seasons Jim has worked behind the scenes at AIO on advertising, promotion & administration. He holds a B.A. from Kalamazoo College and a M.A. from the University of Iowa. Jim is an award-winning documentary filmmaker and president of his own production company, Acadia Pictures. His new documentary, *Fielding Dreams: A Celebration of Baseball Scouts*, recently premiered at the Sarasota Film Festival.

**Kathy Dubbs** returns as the AIO Co-Program Director for her 35th summer. With a B.A. in Biology from Kalamazoo College in Michigan and a M.S. in Geology from Stephen F. Austin University in

Texas, Kathy is currently teaching Geology and Oceanography at Blinn College in Bryan, Texas. She has spent several years teaching marine studies and env. education in a variety of ecosystems. Previously a teacher/ program director for an environmental center in New England as well as an instructor of tropical marine ecology in Florida, Kathy also teaches in all of our winter programs. She is PADI & Life Guard certified. Her interests include hiking, running, birding and wildlife conservation. Each spring, she and her husband, Tim, volunteer for the National Park Service patrolling for nesting sea turtles along the Texas Gulf Coast. And she always wins at backgammon!

**Timothy Dubbs** joins us for his 30th summer as the Co-Program Director. He has a B.S. in Environmental Geology from the U. of Mississippi, a M.S. in Environmental Science and a B.A. in Anthropology from the U. of Texas, Dallas. Tim has taught and directed in science field programs in New York and Texas. Tim spent 25 years as a core teacher at Houston's ISD's Outdoor Education Center and has been a classroom science teacher within the Texas public school system. Tim devotes much time and effort to environmental issues including sea turtle conservation and wilderness preservation. He has research experience in alpine ecology, habitat survey and restoration. He is a PADI certified scuba diver and a YMCA trained lifeguard. Tim is a blues music aficionado, has skydiving experience, and also has interest in historic aircraft and auto racing.

**Matt Lubicky** will return for his 21st summer. For the past 6 years, he's been teaching earth science, honors biology, and robotics at Moorestown Friends School in Moorestown, NJ. He spent 7 years working for Houston ISD Outdoor Ed Center where he was an Education Leader. Matt has a B.A. and B.S. from UNH in English and Marine/



Freshwater Biology, respectively. He spent a year teaching honors Biology at Dover High School where he enjoyed teaching about the intersection of science and history, whaling and evolution. He has conducted research on the Atlantic Cod stock in the Gulf of Maine and studied at SEA Semester, completing research on phytoplankton in the Pacific. Matt has worked for the AIO Tropical and Florida programs, as a substitute teacher and a volunteer/tutor. In his free time, Matt enjoys just about everything outdoors, from Ultimate Frisbee to photography to woodworking and visiting thrift stores.

**Alicia Navarrete** returns to AIO for her 11th summer with extensive teaching experience, including 8 years with the Houston ISD Outdoor Education Center, the Rochester Rotary Sunshine Campus for students with disabilities, Little Tree Education (a Montessori school), and Kinderker (a bilingual pre-school in Nicaragua). Alicia has a B.S. in Elementary Education from SUNY Oswego. Currently, Alicia is a Senior Facilitator at the Princeton-Blairtown center, which provides adventure-based, experiential education to youth from historically marginalized communities. She is a certified ACCT Level II practitioner, a wilderness first aid responder and a certified lifeguard. She loves to travel and relishes outdoor activities of any and all sorts, performing basic carpentry and going to movies.

**Chris Cayo (CJ)** returns to us for his 15th summer as a Recreation Staff member. Chris (or CJ as many of us call him) has attended more of the AIO programs as a student than anyone and now he's pleased to be working with the students as a staff member. He lives in Miami, Florida in the summer and sometimes winters in Colorado so he can partake in two of his favorite past times: diving and skiing. CJ has extensive SCUBA experience and helps oversee our salt water tanks during the summer and shows us all up with his diving skills on the Belize programs. He has worked with injured youth and veterans for several years and loves giving back!

**Emily Shopland** joins us for her 6th summer on the oceanographic teaching staff but she is no stranger to AIO. She (and her brother) have been students in the program, too. Emily received her B.A. in Elementary Education and Biology from the University of Rhode Island and then started her teaching career at the Compass School before

moving into her own classroom of 5th and 6th grade students to teach Math and Science at the Danville School in Vermont. After a lifetime in Vermont, Emily moved to Maine where she currently teaches 5th grade teaching position at Alfred Elementary School in Sanford. She also spent four summers at W. Alton Jones Environmental Education Center as an outdoor science educator. Emily is looking forward to returning to AIO and sharing her love of the ocean and our program to students. Welcome back, Emily!

**Akiva Garfield** is returning for his 4th year and 3rd as a teaching staff member. He graduated from SUNY New Paltz in New York with a BS in Geology and his M.S. in secondary education. He has spent time identifying areas of erosion and other threats to streams in Delaware County and was a Watershed Steward with the Catskill Regional Invasive Species Partnership. Akiva has also spent many years life guarding, is a competitive swimmer and recently began rock climbing. He currently is teaching 10th grade Earth Science at Spackenkill High School. Glad you're back!

**Steven Gourley** is returning for his 3rd summer as a teaching staff. He continues to pursue his studies as a senior at the U. of Southern Mississippi though he'll be transferring to a college in Florida next year. Steven has been volunteering at the Hattiesburg Zoo, working closely with zoo keepers to care for the animals. He also has been working with Sawfish Conservation Society. He's looking forward to returning and we're looking forward to having him back!

**Rosalind Bailey** joins us for her 2nd summer as a member of the teaching staff and is another staff member who was once a student at AIO. She has won several scholarships and internships for her work in science, most notably the NOAA Ernest F. Hollings Scholarship which took her to Hawaii as an education outreach intern. Rosie worked as a research assistant in the Putnam Lab at URI and was at the BBIS in Bermuda. Other work experiences include Ogontiz Camp and as a pharmacy tech. She will be teaching marine science at the Catalina Island Marine Institute this Fall. We're excited Rosie is back!

**Gaby Alleva** is joining us for her first summer as a teaching staff member but has been a student in our program and an intern several years ago. Since that time, Gaby has gone on to earn her BA in

Literature and Secondary Education from American University in Washington, DC and her MS in Social Justice in Education from Trinity University in DC as well. Though she's from CT originally, for the past 10 years, Gaby has taught elementary and middle school students in Washington, Virginia and Maryland. In her freetime, she enjoys hiking, swimming and traveling. Gaby is excited to return to Mt. Desert Island and AIO this summer!

**Grace Gilmore** is returning for her 13th summer and her 5th as the Head Cook (she makes wicked good food!). In previous summers she has held positions as a chef's assistant, teaching staff member and Intern Coordinator. Grace graduated from Kalamazoo College in Michigan with her B.A., and from Sarah Lawrence College in NY with her M.F.A. In the off season, Grace is an actor, stage manager, and lighting designer off Broadway. She has performed at the Kennedy Center, studied theatre in London and spent two seasons as a principal acting member at the Mercury Store in NYC. Grace currently works for Loyola University Maryland in the Career Center and is getting married in June. She'll put on her chef's hat for another summer!

**Griffin Gilmore** returns as the second Chef and for his 10th summer. He graduated from McNally Smith College of Music with a degree in music performance and is currently working towards a B.A. in Japanese Language and Culture at Eastern Michigan Univ. Griffin spent his fall semester studying in Osaka, Japan. When he's not studying, Griffin enjoys hiking, climbing and skateboarding. Welcome back, Griffin!

**Ronan Gilmore** and **Tyler Ritchie** are returning to work in the kitchen this summer. Ronan has worked at AIO several summers as a dishwasher and cooks helper. He is currently a sophomore at Lake Michigan College in Benton Harbor, MI. Tyler returns for a second summer as the cooks helper and is currently a manager at Cottage Inn in Ypsilanti, MI.

**Pamela Shelton RN** is returning for her 13th summer as our nurse. Pam has worked in many different areas of nursing and is certified in case management... being sure the patient is receiving proper care. She has been involved in home health care, alternative nursing, occupational health, and hospice work and spent five years at Mercy Hospital in Portland. Pam has also been a RN Clinical Instructor and recently worked in Maine schools as a school nurse. She's also a sailor from way back. Pam is grateful to be returning to beautiful Mt. Desert Island (and we're incredibly grateful for her)!

We are joined by 2 interns this year! **Lars Ruecker** is returning after working as an intern in 2022. He is currently a senior at the UMaine Orono, studying marine science. **Anna Kathawala** is a sophomore at UC Berkeley in the Rausser College of Natural Resources.



## Information on the Upcoming Florida Exploration Program and Belize Tropical Programs

Due to popular demand we have decided to expand our offerings outside of the summer!

**SeaStar Explorations, LLC** will continue to offer one winter trip each year exclusively to AIO students, and begin creating other excursions to marine environments around the world. Stay tuned for more information.

Exploring the culture and ecosystems of each place we visit, we'll discover the unique conservation issues facing these environments and how local communities address them.

The next AIO Florida Exploration Program is in November 22-27, 2024 and the next Tropical Program is in Belize at the Tropical Research and Education Center in Ambergris Caye from November 22-30, 2025. Material will be handed out at orientations for both programs during the sessions. We have already taken several registrations from past students for the Florida program and will continue to take new registrations after your session is complete.