



Getting youth *out there* since 2001

WAITING FOR SNOW

As we all move steadily forward into a new calendar year, our eyes look ahead to when we can gather outside, without fear of frostbite (or COVID). Looking forward does not mean that our programming has slowed in the least, and we are excited to give you a peek into all the goings-on at our Granite Street HQ, and the Apex Community Hub on Sullivan Street. We are proud to be a part of this community, and we appreciate your support in our work. Like us on [Facebook](#). Follow us on [Instagram](#). Or [donate](#) on our website. Thank you!

PLANNING FOR GROWTH



Please welcome our new Communications and Outreach Specialist to Apex! Jonathan Uribe is a native of the DC area, but has roots in Maine that go back to the Revolutionary War, Criehaven Island is named after his great, great, great, great grandfather. He returned to his ancestral lands in September of 2018, and immediately fell in love with Biddeford. He was drawn to the community-centric organizations, the thriving food and art scene, as well as the access to nature that is unparalleled in Southern Maine. Until the summer of 2021, Jonathan was a chef and business operations consultant. However, he found that his passion for community-building and facilitating connections between people outweighed his desire to cook food. He brings experience working with the immigrant community in DC to his role here at Apex, and is excited to use his years of experience in the hospitality industry to help ensure everyone that interacts with Apex feels welcome, appreciated, and like an integral string in the fabric of their community.

EXPLORATION AND ADVENTURE



While it may be cold outside, that doesn't mean our Apex Outdoor School has cooled down at all. We offer classroom based courses through the winter, with an aim at making you a more confident, competent, and conscientious individual. These courses include *Intro To Map & Compass Navigation*, *The 10 Essentials of Wilderness Travel*, *Wilderness Skills (Winter Edition)*, *How to Prepare for a Backpacking Trip*, and *Leave No Trace Wilderness Ethic*. Full-day and half-day field based classes will be offered on Saturdays including, *Backcountry Navigation with Map & Compass*, and *Intro to Mountain Biking*. Check out our website for more information on the courses we are currently offering!

LEADERSHIP AND EMPOWERMENT



FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Our Family Engagement Intern, Sydney, has been hard at work collecting clothing, toys, and craft supplies. She has worked closely with the McArthur Library, as well as the Biddeford Police Department to collect and distribute warm clothing to families in need. We are overjoyed at the immediate impact that these partnerships have in our community, and are excited to continue to build these connections and relationships!

Should you, or someone you know be in need of a jacket, gloves, hats, socks, or any other cold-weather gear, please do not hesitate to reach out! We would love to help ensure that as many of our community members are as warm as possible.

JOB READINESS



In early December, we continued to build the skills of some of our newer ABF team members around the services that we provide. We also did some career exploration with some of our high schoolers visiting American Rheinmetall Systems. There, we did a tour and talked to some employees who have worked their way up the ladder to learn more about a career in manufacturing and what to consider.

Behind the scenes, we are working to expand our partnerships with potential local employers as well as building out a micro-credentialing system with University of Maine that tracks and verifies the skills that students are learning and practicing.

If you are interested in bringing your unique experiences and expertise to our youth, please feel free to reach out about potential opportunities to share!

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



At the end of December, we had a group of volunteers bring their energy and skill to Apex HQ. They spent the day painting, organizing, breaking down bikes, and even helped clean up the exterior of our building! We are so thankful to everyone that is able to help us pursue our larger goals, and are excited about a new year of opportunities to work with all of you.

There are two ways to get involved, as a mentor or as a volunteer. The difference is that mentors commit to work directly with our youth, while volunteer opportunities

will typically not include working with our youth. You may contribute either or both ways depending on your experience, comfort level, particular skill set, and/or amount of time you would like to contribute. Both roles provide opportunities to support Apex's work in meaningful ways.



A WINTER BLUEJAY



Crisply the bright snow whispered,
Crunching beneath our feet;
Behind us as we walked along the parkway,
Our shadows danced,
Fantastic shapes in vivid blue.
Across the lake the skaters
Flew to and fro,
With sharp turns weaving
A frail invisible net.
Sara Teasdale, [A Winter Bluejay](#)

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