



UNITY
COLLEGE

SKY LODGE

UNITY COLLEGE SKY LODGE
END OF YEAR REVIEW
GOALS & ACHIEVEMENTS
2020-2021

Sky Lodge, a historic cabin resort and campus

situated on more than 150 acres in north-western Maine, was gifted to Unity College in 2018. It was originally built in 1929 as a hunting and fishing getaway and renamed "Sky Lodge" by two former WWII airmen in the 1940s. Over the last ten years the main lodge has been lovingly restored to its original state and Unity College continues to make upgrades to the property. The amenities at Sky Lodge include a restaurant, conference center, contemporary cabins for rental, swimming pool, antique auto museum, and model railroad museum, as well as hiking trails for recreation year-round. Outdoor activities nearby include hiking, golfing, biking, canoeing, kayaking, fishing, whitewater rafting, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and snowmobiling.

Unity College Sky Lodge provides a unique opportunity to demonstrate new possibilities for the outdoor adventure traveler and for those who travel with purpose. Sky Lodge embodies the mission of Unity College by emphasizing the environment and natural resources through sustainable practices, while offering Unity College students a place to immerse themselves in learning about sustainable tourism, hospitality, adventure careers, and more. Sky Lodge is an integral part of the local economy in the Moose River Valley and the greater Jackman, Maine area, and together, we are laying the foundation for students to experience a real-world manifestation of their curriculum within a strong business environment which has varied revenue streams and opportunities for learning.





DEMONSTRATING SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DURING A PANDEMIC

■ **The introduction of Homestyle Heat & Eat Frozen Meals.** To accommodate the need for additional meal options for Sky Lodge guests and those who live and stay in the local community we began offering convenient grab and go prepared meals.

■ In response to the pandemic, we incorporated “Committed to You,” the staff at Sky Lodge are committed to the safety of all guests and in 2020 they earned the **Hospitality Maine Covid-19 Readiness micro-credential** which was issued by Eastern Maine Community College. This micro-credential demonstrates that our staff have a comprehensive understanding of the best practices necessary to create a safe and healthy environment for themselves, their coworkers, outside vendors, and their customers.

■ For increased safety Sky Lodge implemented the **contactless experience** with to continued commitment to offering online bookings, electronic payments, email and text communications. Guests were provided the option to go directly to their accommodations upon arrival. All spaces are disinfected using environmentally conscious cleaners and an electrostatic sprayer for increased efficiency and effectiveness. Most importantly, social distancing and appropriate Personal Protective Equipment is worn by all employees in adherence to Unity College, state, and local guidelines.

■ To support the outdoor adventure traveler looking to explore during the pandemic, **a digital Activities Guide** was created to highlight the wealth of outdoor options in the Moose River Valley region.

■ To increase exposure within the State of Maine and reinforce our commitment to the environment we teamed up with **Maine Outdoor Brands** for their **#RecreateResponsibly** campaign.

INVESTMENTS IN THE COMMUNITY

Moose River Valley Center (MRVC)

- Continued to publish the **MRVC newsletter**, which helps the local community stay informed on local events.
- **Supports local entrepreneurs** by making space available to rent providing businesses a place to start and grow. During the 2020-21 year we rented to a local massage therapist.
- **Hosted a community holiday food program** through our partnership with the Community Health Action team which offered meals and crafts to seniors in the community.
- The doors of the MRVC closed due to the pandemic but we are happy to report that as of June 1, 2021, the **MRVC re-opened to the public.**

Sky Lodge opened a fitness center which offers guests from near and far opportunities to engage in a healthy lifestyle by providing access to fitness equipment in a modern, climate-controlled space. This fulfilled a major need in the community because the next closest health and fitness offerings are 60 miles away.

We hosted an open house in the Train Museum for local kids who had not been able to participate in field trips due to the restrictions caused by COVID-19.

Continued to extend access to local recreational trails.

Through Sky Lodge's renewed membership in the Border Rider Sportsman Club, we **secured groomed trail access** from the lodge to the major snowmobile trails in the area, creating a world-class snowmobiling experience.

Continued to make donations to local community organizations to support fundraising events while promoting Sky Lodge.

Sky Lodge teamed with the Moose River-Jackman Fire Department, United States Border Patrol, United States Customs, Somerset County Sheriff's Office, and Penobscot Community Health Care Para-Medicine program to host an **Active Shooter Training** at Sky Lodge.





DEVELOP BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

Sky Lodge Marketing efforts:

Website: <https://skylodge.unity.edu/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/unitycolleges skylodge>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/skylodgemaine/>

Postcard and other collateral

Signed contract with marketing service to provide digital marketing support to increase direct booking and increase the rate of revenue.

The Mountain View Dining Room was open from November 2020 through the beginning of June 2021 generating \$98,000 in revenue.

The Sky Lodge website was enhanced to include information on the Mountain View Dining Room and its available offerings.

Mailers were sent to every household in the local area letting people know about the catering and meals to go options from the Mountain View Dining Room in an effort support the local community and Sky Lodge during the pandemic.

Bookings continued for corporate events and weddings for the 2021-2022 year in light of COVID-19 restrictions being eased beginning in the summer of 2021.

In April of 2021, Unity College hired **Dr. Tara J. Konya as the new Dean for the School of Environmental Business and Sustainable Ventures** and one of her tasks is to work with the Director of Sky Lodge to continue building academic offerings within the Unity College business programs that utilize all the assets that Sky Lodge has.

ECONOMIC IMPACTS:

JULY 1, 2020 - JUNE 30, 2021

LOCAL AREA

As Sky Lodge evolves and becomes more financially independent, the subsidy provided by Unity College decreases with a goal of total self sufficiency, making good on our commitment to the region as it grows.

\$430,739
Earned Income

\$773,859
Expenses

\$343,119
Institutional Commitment to Sky Lodge

We like to serve the people in our communities, and our customers are the community's customers.

1,891
Customers Served

\$250
Average Spent Regionally per Visit

\$222
Average Spent per Customer

65
People Served Through Community Programs

MAINE ECONOMY

Shopping locally is core to our values because it helps local vendors and reduces our environmental impact. We were also able to invest in capital improvements funded by grants and Unity College.

86%
Amount Spent with Maine Vendors (over \$196K)

\$26,381
Investment in Facilities and Construction

EMPLOYMENT

Our employees who live in the Moose River Valley have the financial resources they need to participate in the community, both socially and economically.

18
Full- and Part-Time Employees

\$296,499
Annual Payroll & Benefits

INVEST IN THE GIFT FROM THE COURI FOUNDATION

- **Expanded the internet network** from the main Lodge to the cabins, providing guests with a fast and reliable internet connection regardless of where they are staying within Sky Lodge.
- **Installed and actively used a new Point of Sale (POS)** system in the Mountain View Dining Room creating a modern, efficient payment process for guests and allowing for proper inventory and costs management.
- **Hired a Sous Chef** for the Mountain View Dining Room.
- **Performed general maintenance** for the property including installing a new well pump.

UPCOMING

Hosting the Real Maine Weddings fall 2021 photo shoot (this was rescheduled from spring of 2021 due to COVID-19).

Host to the 2022 Inland Fisheries & Wildlife Moose Lottery Drawing in June 2022.

The Mountain View Dining Room paused lunch and dinner service for the summer of 2021 to focus on catering events. It will re-open in the fall of 2021.

Projecting a 50% increase in accommodation revenue for the 2021-2022 fiscal year.

Increasing ancillary services to drive incremental revenue.

Increasing Sky Lodge's integration into Unity College's expanding learning opportunities which includes (but isn't limited to) to the academic business programs within Unity College.

Opening the John & Elaine Couri Welcome Center as an outdoor adventure hub for the greater Moose River Valley and Jackman, Maine area.