Summer and fall at HMI have been full of new challenges, new faces, and a new sense of community. After record-breaking snowfall in the winter and spring, this was the first summer in living HMI memory where our summer term students had to be prepared for snow travel on their expedition. It was certainly a new challenge, but nothing that our team couldn’t handle!

Speaking of our team, we have welcomed seven new staff and faculty members since April. Turn to page 6 to get to know these new members of our community. And speaking of our community, it’s growing! This summer we completed construction of four new townhomes as a part of our Campaign for Community. With a total of six families now living on campus, we are building an even deeper sense of community, and are entering the final phase of the campaign.

Of course, all of this amazing growth would never happen without the support of our community across the country. Thank you for being such an important part of HMI’s past, present, and future.

THROUGH OUR LENS THIS SUMMER & FALL:

TO FOLLOW MORE OF HMI’S ADVENTURES, FIND US ON SOCIAL MEDIA
This past summer, Semester 22 alumnus Jack Lee married his wife, Kelsey, on HMI’s campus. It was a beautiful weekend and we were so happy to host the celebration. I was also honored to speak during the ceremony. Jack and Kelsey asked me to talk about the values HMI lives that also apply to a successful union. With their permission, I want to share excerpts of my reflections with you all. Congratulations, Jack and Kelsey!

"Today we celebrate marriage. It’s right we do this. A union is beautiful and inspiring. It brings spring even here, to our endless winter in Leadville. Love is what has gotten Jack and Kelsey to this point, but what will keep them going is more than that.

I hope the lessons that Jack learned as a student at HMI ten years ago will seem as relevant moving forward as they did then. I want to share with you some of those lessons about communication, expedition behavior, and accepting one another for who you are.

Our students come to love themselves for who they are, just the way they are. More importantly, they appreciate the people around them in the same way. I want to make sure you are ready to offer this gift to one another.
First, do not hide anything from one another. A cornerstone of HMI is that communication is a gift—the person giving feedback feels better for getting it off her chest and the person hearing it becomes better for the awareness of how he impacts others. There is no room at HMI for one of us to know something or feel something about others in our community without sharing it with them. I hope you offer the same gift to one another.

My second tip is to practice expedition behavior (EB) every day. What is EB? The idea behind EB is that there is the group, and then there are individuals within the group. Each individual will share in a greater reward if they ask what the group needs instead of what they personally want. On their best days, our students put the interests of the group above themselves. But, you, Jack and Kelsey, are about to be married—a far greater commitment than the semester our students promise to each other at HMI. I urge you every day to practice EB, to put the magic of your marriage above your own wants.

The last piece of advice I have for you stems from what I am most proud of at HMI. Our students come to love themselves for who they are, just the way they are. More importantly, they appreciate the people around them in the same way. I want to make sure you are ready to offer this gift to one another. Of course, I hope both of you will be willing to grow together and compromise on some habits and desires for the other. But ultimately, today, marry the person standing with you instead of an image of someone you wish them to be.

Marriages are complicated things, as complicated as the people in them. Today, the love you feel for one another makes it all seem simple, obvious. Tomorrow, too, I hope!

But one day, the skies will be greyer and the landscape flatter. It will be winter. And then I hope you find a new kind of love, one born from communication, expedition behavior, and accepting one another ‘as is.’

And may that love, Jack and Kelsey, be strong, real, grateful, and everlasting.”
Since April, we have welcomed seven new faculty and staff members to HMI. We are thrilled about the experience and energy that they bring and are excited to introduce them to you!

**Dave**

**POSITION:** Director of Summer Programs and Wilderness Coordinator

**HOMETOWN:** Falmouth, MA

**WHEN DID YOU START AT HMI:**
I’ve been lucky enough to work at HMI in a fair number of capacities off and on over the years, the first being as a Spanish Apprentice in 2011.

**What were you doing before coming to HMI?**
Most recently, I was working for Downstream Construction in Leadville building the new faculty housing for HMI!

**What do you love about your new job?**
I love the broad scope of the position—working with the Semester as an evacuation coordinator, the Gap as a climbing instructor, and the summer programs as an administrator allows me to continue to be involved with numerous facets of the school.

**What’s the most interesting thing that you’ve noticed about HMI or Leadville so far?**
Fall never disappoints up here! The days are crisp, but not cold, the alpine vegetation turns a beautiful red, and the aspens pop with color.

**What is your unique talent?**
Tough question… I suppose I consider myself a radical moderate, not in political terms, but in the sense that I’m uniquely pretty okay at a lot of things. It’s no way to get sponsored, but it suits me and allows me to engage with a variety of people and places through all sorts of mediums.
What were you doing before coming to HMI?
I was fundraising for an environmental advocacy organization based in Denver.

What do you love about your new job?
I love getting to know our community of supporters and hearing what an impact they have on the world through our students and alumni.

What’s the most interesting thing that you’ve noticed about HMI or Leadville so far?
Before coming to HMI, I have never been greeted by colleagues with an enthusiastic “Wow, you look so CLEAN!” This, of course, happened after they all returned from 18 days of not showering in the backcountry.

What is your unique talent?
I have a really good memory. In fact, I still remember my lines from a play in second grade!

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What were you doing before coming to HMI?
I was leading backpacking trips in the Sierra Nevada mountains and learning to climb.

What do you love about your new job?
I love being a part of such a supportive and fun community of both staff and students in an incredibly beautiful place.

What’s the most interesting thing that you’ve noticed about HMI or Leadville so far?
Leadville is home to a community of some of the most caring, welcoming, and passionate people I’ve ever met.

What is your unique talent?
Endurance. Endurance running, endurance swimming, endurance dancing, endurance knitting.
What were you doing before coming to HMI?
I was working at an all-boys camp in central New Hampshire.

What do you love about your new job?
From day one, the HMI family welcomed me. I have felt at home from the very beginning. Hiking around in the wilderness for 18 days at a time is a really nice bonus too!

What’s the most interesting thing that you’ve noticed about HMI or Leadville so far?
The mining culture and history is fascinating, and the pride felt from the mining community is still very strong.

What is your unique talent?
I make a mean smoothie.

** POSITION: ** Maintenance Assistant  
** HOMETOWN: ** Boonville, NY  
** WHEN DID YOU START AT HMI: ** June 2019

What were you doing before coming to HMI?
I was building a 13,000-square-foot concrete home on a mountainside near Pikes Peak.

What do you love about your new job?
I love the group of people I work with. Every day is fun and my co-workers are full of energy.

What’s the most interesting thing that you’ve noticed about HMI or Leadville so far?
Leadville and HMI are both very healthy and happy places. You have to be tough to live at 10,000 feet.

What is your unique talent?
I can swim in an alpine lake for at least a full minute.

** POSITION: ** History Faculty  
** HOMETOWN: ** Newmarket, NH  
** WHEN DID YOU START AT HMI: ** August 2019
We arrived at the trailhead filled with optimism, heavy sleds, and a willingness to embrace the challenges of winter expedition. Our group consisted of advanced to “never-ever” skiers, but after a week of training on our local Ski Cooper mountain, everyone felt prepared to travel safely and efficiently into the wilderness. Little did we know that we would encounter two record-breaking storms, unprecedented snow conditions, three broken tarps, an entire group evacuation, and 36 hours confined in our quigloo snow shelters. Through it all, this trip will forever reign as one of HMI’s most epic adventures.

Our first challenge came on night one. After a six-hour ski to our camp, we indulged in hot appetizers of fried eggrolls and mozzarella sticks. Spirits were high as students constructed their first shelters, built our kitchen and bathroom sites, and had our first Circle under the winter stars. A light dusting of snow started falling as students snuggled into their sleeping bags. Around midnight, the “light dusting” built up to about a foot of fresh snow. This is when the first tarp collapsed under the accumulated weight. Over the course of the next four hours, despite our efforts to shovel off the tarps, the other two student tarps collapsed as well. The rest of our night as the Instructor Team was spent moving from tarp to tarp, excavating snow, re-rigging broken shelters, and keeping everyone warm and dry. Some students seemed thrilled by the challenge, while others tried to sleep through it. One student even exclaimed at 2am, “I live for this!” By sunrise, three feet of snow had completely erased our camp that we worked so hard to establish. We spent the morning recreating our kitchen, finding our food bags, and getting water boiling.

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times.
After a late start, we skinned uphill, breaking trail through three feet of new snow. This resulted in a five-hour journey to cover one mile. By the time we made it to our quigloo camp, it was too late to dig them out to create our shelters, so we made the difficult call to evacuate as a group.

Back on campus, we dried our gear, caught up on classes, cooked expedition food in the kitchen, and slept as a group in Stuen Hall, our "indoor quigloo." After 24 hours, the weather cleared, we made it back up to our quigloo camp, dug out strong shelters, and enjoyed two days of sunshine. We made friends with the Grey Jays, vlogged, had dance parties, engaged in a powerful English class, and skied some laps in the fresh backcountry powder.

This break from the weather, however, didn’t last long. While at our second quigloo site, the Evacuation Coordinators texted us that another storm was moving into our area. This storm was being referred to as a “bomb cyclone,” the inland equivalent of a hurricane where a major pressure drop is accompanied by high winds and heavy snowfall. For us, this looked like the surface of a white Mars—our quigloos, which had previously been large dome structures sticking out of the slope, started to disappear as the wind and snow carved a new landscape. Confined to their quigloos for 36 hours, student absurdity ensued in the form of cheese throwing competitions, pepperoni spa treatments, DMCs (deep meaningful conversations), more vlogging, and national anthem singing. It was the best of times, it was the worst of times.

The challenges of this trip brought us together in ways that only expedition can. In our final Circle, students reflected on how much they learned about themselves and each other during this 10-day experience. Some shared their confidence that if they could complete this trip, then they can do anything. Others treasured the moments of levity that shined brighter than our struggles. All-in-all, this trip quickly taught many of the things we hope our students will learn over their entire semester: a belief in themselves and the skills to work with a team when faced with a challenge.
Much of the learning that takes place at HMI comes from working, living, and learning with people who have different life experiences and hold unique perspectives. Because of this, the more diversity we have in our community, the stronger our program will be. In order to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion at HMI, this summer four faculty and staff members travelled to North Andover, Massachusetts to join with one hundred other independent school employees for the week-long Diversity Directions workshop. Conference attendees Avery Kernan and Ray McGaughey share their takeaways from the experience.
RAY MCGAUGHEY
Director of Admissions

This was my first extended diversity and inclusion workshop and the word that best describes my week is powerful. Over the course of the program, we listened to independent school leaders from around the country as they shared their stories and offered insight into building diverse and inclusive school communities. In focus groups we shared our own “cultural stories” and debriefed each speaker through a mediated discussion. In many ways, the work felt simultaneously personal and professional.

In my role as HMI’s Director of Admissions, I recruit each class of HMI Semester and Summer Term students. The admissions team has influence over the demographic breakdown of our student body and our work can directly lead to classes that are more diverse—or more homogenous. After hearing successful strategies that other schools have implemented to recruit students from ethnically, socio-economically, and culturally diverse backgrounds, I am inspired to deepen our efforts to broaden HMI’s reach in order to connect with students who otherwise might never have considered studying away in Colorado.

Of course, our small community isn’t made up of only students—it also includes apprentices, faculty, and staff. Since Diversity Directions, a team of HMI employees has gotten together to create a “Hiring Taskforce.” We are working to examine biases in our hiring process, market our job openings to more diverse applicants, and generally improve the way we hire. We hope that this work will not only help us build diversity in our adult community but also allow us to find the absolute best candidate for every opening on our team.

AVERY KERNAN
Apprentice Program Coordinator

As a sixteen year-old, HMI was the first place that I discovered what it meant to be my whole self. I was able to put myself out there so vulnerably because I was part of a community that deeply cared for me as an individual. I felt like my whole self was included and important to my community. This allowed me to act with confidence and creativity without fear of judgement. This is why inclusivity is personal to me. I want to make sure every student—no matter their background—feels as deeply cared for and encouraged as I did.

Spending a full week steeped in conversation about diversity, equity, and inclusion at Diversity Directions stressed to me that achieving diversity alone is not enough for our community to thrive. In order for all students at our school to feel the same level of support that I did, we must also work toward building a culture that is inclusive and equitable.

In order for our school to become more inclusive, we need for each individual staff member to feel a personal connection to why it matters. When we feel personally motivated in this regard, it will affect the decisions that we each make, and those decisions will change the larger culture that we build together.
In his masterful long poem, “Four Quartets,” T.S. Eliot writes that “the end of all our exploring / Will be to arrive where we started / And know the place for the first time.” Gathered in Stuen Hall at the conclusion of each semester, students inevitably mention how much has changed since they first stepped through the door of the Barnes Building—how they’ve grown in self-knowledge, confidence, and openness. How they’ve come to know themselves “for the first time.”

The profound internal changes that happen over the course of four months tend to overshadow the remarkable external changes this place has also undergone since Semester 1. There are few left on campus to remember the color of the first yurt, the “porta-parties,” or the seemingly inconceivable fact that the Barnes Building didn’t actually have a door when the first intrepid students arrived in Leadville in 1998.

Campus housing offers clear proof that HMI invests in its community. It recognizes that the student experience begins with those who make transformative education possible: the faculty and staff.

With the addition of four employee townhomes on campus this past August, the master plan that HMI founders Molly and Christopher Barnes proposed over two decades ago has become one large step closer to fruition. I feel grateful for their vision, the dedication of our builders, and expeditious shipments of lumber: my new townhome on Grey Jay Way came complete with not one, but two external doors.

From the window above my kitchen table I can see Mount Massive peaking through the stands of lodgepole pine. Inside are broad, exposed beams, doors of knotty pine, and two bedrooms with large windows that let in the sunshine and biting air of evening in Colorado. I now have cupboards enough to start shopping in bulk. Against the advice of our architect—given the efficient insulation of each unit—the faculty and staff committee charged with approving the blueprints insisted on a woodstove in the living room. As any true HMI student would agree, cast irons are an irresistible aesthetic.

Without a commute, I’ve found time to run the roads and trails with students more often. I take a few more of my meals on campus. And I’ll even admit to a midday nap or two. I look forward to saving my paycheck from the gas pump, as well as the insatiable maw of the Leadville rental market.

There’s a clear “why” behind the “what” of campus housing. HMI has an inspiring mission that attracts talented educators; this housing enables HMI to offer compensation that will help keep that talent around for the long-term. Campus housing offers clear proof that HMI invests in its community. It recognizes that the student experience begins with those who make transformative education possible: the faculty and staff.

“To arrive where we started.” With the final pieces of the campus master plan falling into place, HMI begins its next decade in a position of strength. But in all the ways that really matter, nothing has changed. Stop by for a tour of Unit D if you ever find yourself on Grey Jay Way in the near future. We’ll chat missing doors, mission statements, and what it means to know a place, again, for the first time.
For many alumni, leaving HMI also means leaving Leadville behind. This was not the case for Emily Blau, a Semester 21 Student and Semester 33 Apprentice who decided she wanted to call Leadville home. After spending some time teaching with the Lake County School District, Emily is now the Dean of Students at Lake County Intermediate School and a critical member of this small mountain community. Corey Rost, Semester 43 Marketing Apprentice, sat down to hear more about what living in Leadville is like for an HMI alum.

**ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT:**

**EMILY BLAU**

**Q:** WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PART ABOUT LIVING IN LEADVILLE?

**A:** We are here because we all aren’t there....” That’s what they say about Leadvillians. As most HMI alumni know, Leadville is a very special mountain town. But what most alumni may not realize is that Leadville is home to so much more than our beloved institute. We have a robust and resilient community. We have long-time locals and passionate transplants. So many adults in our town are dedicated to our youth and working together to help them thrive.

**Q:** WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED OVER THE COURSE OF YOUR TIME WORKING FOR THE LAKE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT?

**A:** I have been so privileged and lucky when it comes to education. I have been a part of many incredible learning communities since elementary school and yet, I have learned more about myself and others working in Lake County. I have learned about equity and access. I have learned how to engage with and support all learners—struggling, gifted, multilingual, and students from all backgrounds, faiths, and socio-economic statuses. I have learned to be patient because student achievement doesn’t happen overnight. I have learned how to engage with parents when they might not know how to support their child’s educational journey. I have learned how to inspire teachers who work tirelessly each day to provide the greatest experience for their students. This is the most rewarding job I could have ever dreamed of.

**Q:** HOW DID YOUR EXPERIENCES AT HMI SHAPE WHERE YOU ARE TODAY?

**A:** I reflect on my time at HMI almost daily. Not only because I am able to live in this stunning town, but because of the leadership curriculum I studied during my semester and as an apprentice. As a member of our administration staff I am constantly receiving and giving feedback. Our school is committed to more restorative practices when it comes to discipline, so I support VOEmPing between students and staff on a regular basis. Lastly, I am in the process of applying to graduate school; I will hopefully be attending an MBA program next fall. My desire to pursue this degree was inspired right around the time I attended HMI as a student. I want to attend business school to continue to cultivate my leadership potential, to increase my self-awareness, share my ethical compass, and learn how to effectively and compassionately influence those around me.
Last year, our alumni contributed enough funds to support two Semester scholarships? Help more students reach their potential by donating to the Alumni Summit Challenge today!

FOR MORE INFORMATION, HMINET.ORG/SUMMIT-CHALLENGE