

# NEW! MDI YMCA OFFERS A FREE AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

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## Who's Cool After School? by Phin Ramsey

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself to the wonderful community here on Mount Desert Island. My name is Phineas Ramsey and I have come to the MDI YMCA to help build a safe, nurturing and engaging after school program free for all area kids in 3rd through 8th grade.

I would first like to give a brief background of my experiences teaching and why I am passionate about healthy communities, and healthy kids.

I've spent the last three years directing an after school program for high school kids in the South Bronx, New York City. The program, entitled *Rocking the Boat*, sought to teach high school students life lessons such as responsibility, community awareness, and taking pride in one's work. Above all else, we strove to give kids a sense of empowerment.

Students helped build traditional wooden boats and used these boats to do much needed environmental restoration on the Bronx River. Through these different experiential based projects, students not only learned valuable lessons about themselves, but also about social, economic, and environmental impacts that they could have on their own community.

My belief in project-based learning grew from my experiences in the Bronx, and has led me to the Maine coast and to the College of the Atlantic, where I am studying education.

I believe deeply in the power of community. It is clear to me already, that the spirit of community is alive and well here at the MDI YMCA. Through the new after school program, I hope to create an environment where kids can develop their creative passions, learn about the natural world, and have a lot of good old fashioned fun.

If you would like more information on our new after school program, please contact me at the Y at 288-3511. I would love to share with you some of the exciting new improvements we are undertaking at the Y for all area children to enjoy.

Already, I have had the opportunity to meet many wonderful people in this community, and I look forward to the chance to meet everyone who calls the YMCA and MDI home.



*Phin welcomes children in third through eighth grades to join him at the MDI YMCA after school. The new program is free for everyone.*



MDI YMCA › 21 PARK STREET ›  
› BAR HARBOR, ME 04609 ›  
› 207-288-3511 ›  
INFO@MDIYMCA.ORG  
WWW.MDIYMCA.ORG



A Cornerstone for the Island Community Since 1900

The mission of the Mount Desert Island YMCA is to develop community, character, personal growth and wellness in spirit, mind and body for the greater MDI community.