Last year proved to be a very successful year for the Kelly Adirondack Center. It held over two dozen events that attracted over one thousand attendees, drew experts and scholars from around the country and launched a number of new initiatives, such as the “Lunch and Learn” program. Support from our campus community and local friends has been tremendous and we are looking forward to providing an even better selection of engaging and meaningful programming in 2015.

During winter term, the focus will be on Lake George and will draw heavily from the collections in the Adirondack Research Library. Programming will include a discussion on the Apperson papers, a screening of Apperson’s antique lantern slides, and a conversation about the Jefferson Project at Lake George, an endeavor to better understand and manage the multiple factors threatening this pristine aquatic ecosystem.

In spring, the center will turn its attention to the role women have played in the conservation and protection of the Adirondacks. The writings of Jeanne Robert Foster, a twentieth-century Adirondack poet, will be explored and scholar and author Anne LaBastille’s ecological legacy will be honored during Adirondack Week in May.

Over the summer, we experienced some staffing changes at the Kelly Adirondack Center. Edward Summers and Becky Schubmehl left Union to pursue other interests. We thank them for their time and dedication, as they both played important roles in the early successes of the center. While they are missed, it is important to emphasize that the Kelly Adirondack Center is not losing momentum. Nor are we backing away from the center’s role in supporting Union’s “Leveraging Our Location” strategy. We will continue to use the advantage of the College’s proximity to and long history with the Adirondacks as we forge new relationships across the region and the country.

I am pleased to note that this transition phase is being very ably managed by Caleb Northrop, who was hired in August as the Kelly Adirondack Center Post-Baccalaureate Fellow. He manages all programs, events and communications for the center. He is also developing an aggressive long-term research agenda and a community engagement strategy for the coming years. I encourage you to reach out to him with ideas or simply to stop by the center to meet him.

As always, thank you for your continued support. I am truly looking forward to what we will achieve together this year.

Sincerely,

Stephen C. Ainlay, Ph.D.
President of Union College
To say that John Apperson was a photographer is an understatement. His collection includes hundreds of prints, slides, lantern slides, acetate and glass plate negatives. However, many of the items are duplicates. Over the course of the next year, project archivists, who are funded by a Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR) Hidden Collections grant, will determine how best to archive these duplicates. The final accounting of images will be included in the finding aid that will be created after the process is completed.

Of particular note in the collection are photos related to the effects of erosion on some of Lake George’s islands. The issue alarmed and energized Apperson so much that he investigated and began using a process known as rip-rapping to repair and protect at-risk islands from further damage. Using a barge he purchased himself, Apperson hauled rock from the mainland to help combat the erosive effects of high water levels and wave action. He also realized the value of documenting the damage and some of the images show a single location—Manhattan Island—over the period 1911-31. Today, the island is no longer visible and has become a boating hazard because of its invisibility on the surface of the lake.

These and many other photographs taken by Apperson were used in speeches, meetings, and testimonies to influence legislators, neighbors, friends, associates, and strangers to work toward preserving natural resources.
Don’t miss Union College’s 2015 Adirondack Week, scheduled for May 10-15. The line-up includes a student hike at Lake George, an Adirondack photography exhibition and a panel discussion, titled ‘Women and the Adirondacks: An Interdisciplinary Approach.’

The Kelly Adirondack Center will also sponsor artists-in-residence, Ricochet Duo, for a series of events that are reflective of Union’s multidisciplinary connection to the Adirondacks. Over the course of the week, the duo, comprised of pianist, Rose Chancler, and percussionist, Jane Boxall, will meet with music professor Hilary Tann’s performance and composition classes. They will then perform her composition, Solstice, for the May 11 Taylor Time! Concert. The duo will also hold workshops for the Empire State Youth Orchestra in Albany. The highlight of the visit will be a May 13 performance of The Woodswoman Project: a tribute to Anne LaBastille in the GE Theater at Proctors. This multimedia concert weaves together music, sounds and light with photography from well-known Adirondack photographers, Mark Bowie, Shaun Heffernan, Carl Heilman II and Larry Barns. The program, made up of works written for piano and marimba, features a piece composed by Professor Tann.

Ticketing information and the full Adirondack Week schedule will be announced soon.

Last fall, Kelly Adirondack Center Fellow Caleb Northrop attended the National Wilderness Conference in Albuquerque, NM. Members of the wilderness community from across the country gathered not only to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the National Wilderness Act but to learn about and discuss ways to protect our wilderness future. Of particular interest were the innovative approaches used to engage young people with nature. Many of these initiatives and projects addressed and reimagined technology in wilderness spaces. Ideas included adventure writing and environmental film-making courses, groundbreaking soundscape research, and a “Media Disconnect to Reconnect” project, in which students are encouraged to forego cellphones or internet and log their experiences.
DEDICATED TO SUSTAINABILITY

By Meghan Haley-Quigley, Sustainability Coordinator

During the fall term, the Kelly Adirondack Center facilitated an important discussion, titled “The Role of Higher Education in Shaping Our Wilderness Future,” which explored the role Union College and other institutions of higher education can play in imparting to students the value of preserving and protecting wilderness spaces.

Union is committed to exercising leadership by modeling strategies to reduce its ecological footprint. The College is addressing the climate challenge in all areas of campus life and operations by continually taking steps to increase the consciousness of the campus community and to reduce resource consumption. In 2007, President Stephen C. Ainlay signed the American and College University Presidents’ Climate Commitment. This event recognized that immediate action is needed to avert the worst impacts of climate change. Within the first year of the commitment, Union completed a greenhouse gas inventory, founded a sustainability committee, incorporated sustainability into its strategic plan and set a target date of 2060 to achieve carbon neutrality.

This leadership exemplified Union’s ongoing commitment to climate action and launched a series of activities, programs and initiatives. Union has developed a strong environmental science policy and engineering program, established environmental groups, launched numerous operational efforts, tapped into renewable energy sources and has been awarded funding for environmental research. Union is also committed to utilizing green principles when building and renovating campus facilities. For example, the Peter Irving Wold Center is LEED Gold Certified. The Kelly Adirondack Center itself is ‘green’—and has been since 1934 when beams from a Dutch barn were reclaimed and used in the facility’s framework. Today, the building is heated and cooled via nine geothermal/ground-source pumps.

Since 2008, Union has reduced its emissions by 15 percent and is on-target to reach each of its carbon reduction goals. The College’s dedication to sustainability is rooted in its historic appreciation for nature and an ongoing commitment to the environmental well-being of our region.

FOR MORE ON UNION’S SUSTAINABILITY EFFORTS, VISIT UNION.EDU/SUSTAINABILITY

Go paperless! If you’d prefer to receive this newsletter electronically, send an email to Caleb Northrop at northroc@union.edu