

Friends of ACADIA Journal

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LAURA AND VASSAR PIERCE ARE ACADIA'S CHAMPIONS

By Shawn Keeley

As you get to know Laura and Vassar Pierce it is hard not to default to clichés — “the whole is greater than the sum of its parts,” “dynamic duo,” “dream team.”

As Friends of Acadia gears up for our 31st Annual Benefit in August, we are so fortunate Laura and Vassar have stepped up to co-chair the Benefit Committee. They are our first husband and wife co-chairs and one of the youngest leadership teams we have had for the Benefit.

Vassar's roots run deep in Acadia. His great-great-grandfather was Charles W. Eliot, one of Acadia's founders and one of the most important advocates for the establishment of the park. Vassar has spent every summer of his life on MDI, hiking, sailing, biking, and enjoying this beautiful place with family and friends. He also brings a wonderful understanding of FOA — our mission and programs — that were informed by two summers working for FOA as a Ridge Runner and one as the No Child Left Inside intern, a program that helped pave the way for programs like Acadia Quest.

Following his time at FOA Vassar pursued a career in philanthropy and is currently the Interim Director of Advancement at Pomfret School. His knowledge of FOA, experience in philanthropy, and deep connection to the park make him a perfect leader for FOA's Annual Benefit.

Laura's introduction to MDI came through Vassar about 10 years ago. While she does not have quite as much history here, she more than makes up for it with her enthusiastic embrace of Maine, FOA, and Acadia. Laura joined the Benefit Committee three years ago and got right to work on the décor committee. She brings to the committee an incredible eye as an interior designer and a wealth of experience as a former event planner.

If you attended the Benefit the past several years you may have noticed some of the wonderful décor that has made the event more beautiful and helped bring our themes to life. Whether it was the spinnakers in the dinner tent and navigational chart table runners the year we raised funds for the Bass Harbor Lighthouse, or the carriage wheels,

pink granite cobbles, and carriage road bridge placemats from last year, each décor element benefited from Laura's thoughtful approach.

Together, Laura and Vassar bring to the event a wonderful array of skills and experience, as well as a fresh perspective. They will rely on some of our long-time Benefit volunteers while also recruiting new friends and supporters to join the Benefit Committee. With their leadership, this promises to be a successful and memorable year.

As the summer unfolds you may see Laura and Vassar around the island, particularly in Seal Harbor where Laura is opening an interior design shop and studio. If you do see them this summer, please thank them for their service to FOA.

For questions about the Annual Benefit or to donate an auction item to the silent or live auctions, contact Shawn Keeley, shawn@friendsofacadia.org ✨

SHAWN KEELEY is Friends of Acadia's Senior Development Officer



Devoted lovers of Acadia, Laura and Vassar Pierce, shown here atop Acadia Mountain with their dog Henry, are the co-chairs of this year's Friends of Acadia Benefit.