

Your trust in Kismet's work has allowed us to share another wonderful summer of programs with an amazing group of students. It is with heartfelt thanks that I report that your gift has been invaluable in continuing to provide this transformative opportunity.

The students' joyous excitement for the Kismet opportunity is inspiring. We often refer to the Kismet environment as "magic" because we witness this magic time and time again. The students, staff, volunteers, and climbing community are integral in creating this energy. The human connection is palpable in endless moments throughout the day...

- **At the cliff** - we see a student in awe and trepidation of what is in front of them, but after finding a crucial foothold they turn back with such pride and a tremendous smile of achievement - this would bring tears to my eyes daily.

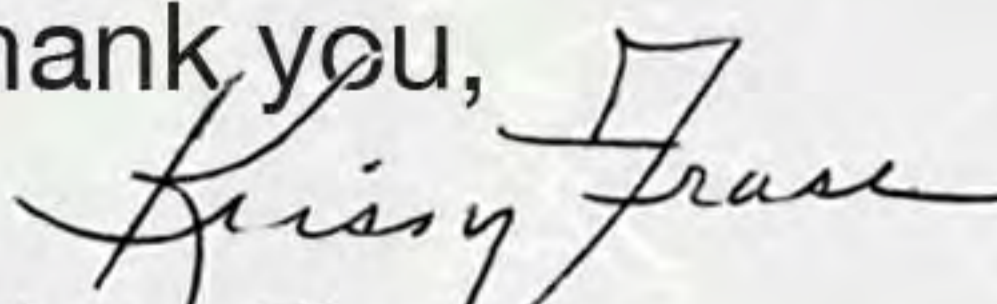
- **At the house** - a student is singing a verse from *Chicago* in preparation for theater tryouts back home, while others play a lively game of cards, and another sits quietly sketching - there is a sense of freedom and comfort.

- **At the dinner table** - a vibrant discussion about the day's climb, favorite movies, or crazy food creations - it is an open platform enveloped in excitement and love.

- **There are challenging moments**, when a student is fatigued or worried about something, but the group helps them work through this challenge by simply listening, empathizing, and understanding - I leave every day feeling that I have learned valuable lessons.

These moments happen every day at Kismet. It is impossible to put into words the interactions and emotions that are experienced, but it is real and it is MAGIC. As Program Manager Ara Morton said one time this summer - "Kismet moments are like capturing lightning in a bottle."

Thank you for being a part of this critical program and providing an opportunity for these kids and all of us involved to share in tremendous moments of kindness, strength, joy and empowerment.

Thank you,

Krissy Fraser
Executive Director
978.420.5831



MISSION

Kismet Rock Foundation nourishes the physical, intellectual, and emotional development of rural and urban children throughout New England before they enter their formative teen years.

VISION

To create a pathway for underserved youths throughout New England to connect with each other through the exploration of rock climbing. To support their emotional and social growth in a diverse, multicultural community, enhancing their ability to thrive in life. Kismet Rock Foundation serves as a replicable model for other organizations with similar constituents and goals.



Photo credit: Corey McMullen

THE PROGRAM

Over the course of this program year we welcomed forty-eight students from Maine, Massachusetts and New Hampshire; gathering for six weeks of summer programming, six off-season indoor climbing days in Kismet communities, and numerous Zoom calls to keep the students connected over the school year.

The relentless 2023 rainy summer did not dampen the spirits of the students or staff who went out to the cliff or a climbing gym for a new challenge each day. Ara, along with climbing guide Army of Cathedral Mountain Guides, tirelessly identified a select cliff each morning, from Cathedral Ledge's Thin Air, to Square Ledge in Pinkham Notch, or various routes up White Horse. On pervasively rainy days, the group opted for area indoor climbing gyms. Each student embraced the opportunity at the cliff: new students learned knots, how to belay, and about the importance of communication; returning students progressed to more varied and technical climbs; and forth year students completed a bold multi-pitch ascent.

After an active day of climbing the students enjoyed additional activities such as swimming, game night, or stargazing, inspired by the enthusiastic and dedicated house staff. In the evening, utilizing a "full value" contract, the group would discuss their "peaks & valleys" of the day to ensure an understanding of how each other is feeling and that boundaries are respected. There are endless moments of kindness and growth that happen throughout the day because of the commitment of the students supported by our dedicated staff, whose compassion and leadership create a safe and loving environment where everyone is seen, heard and valued.



CHALLENGE & REWARD

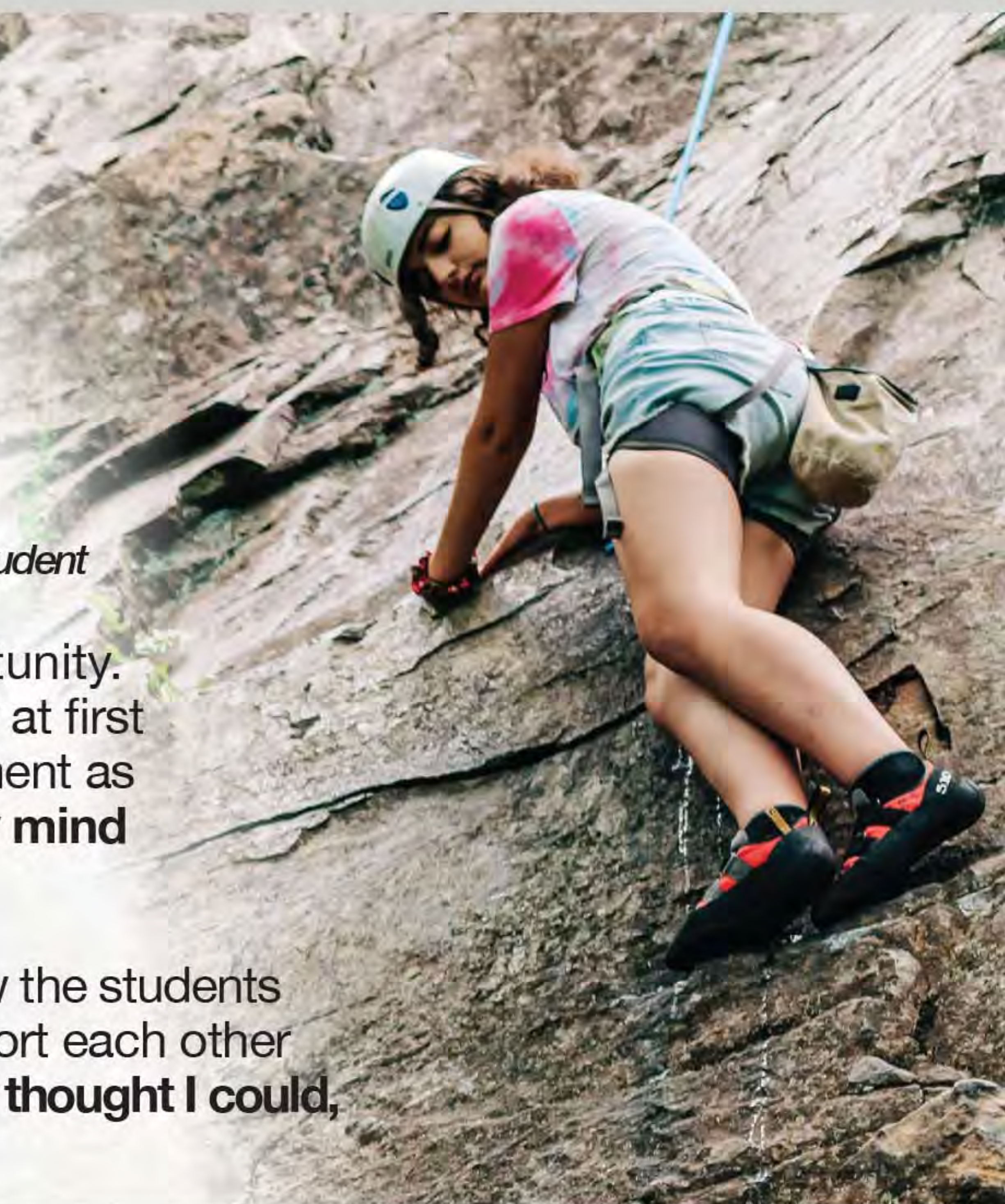
The students are invited to Kismet through a refined process that starts with them being recognized by school counselors as positive and eager teenagers who have few opportunities and resources to participate in activities beyond their home and school environment.

We develop our student groups to reflect a variety of communities, ethnicities, and genders in order to open up a broader world view in a safe and accepting environment. We foster complete acceptance, openness, and a sense of camaraderie. There are no barriers.

"People can be so different, but so alike at the same time." - 2nd year student

It is remarkably evident how gracious the students are for this opportunity. At the cliff they are relentless in their determination to achieve what they at first believe is impossible. There is a beautiful sense of pride and empowerment as the student reaches a new height on the cliff. **"I learned that if I put my mind to something I'm able to do it."** - 1st year student

Within the group dynamic, it is incredibly moving and powerful to see how the students cautiously learn about each other and quickly want to protect and support each other throughout their journeys. **"Kismet allowed me to achieve things I never thought I could, in an environment full of loving and caring people."** - 4th year student

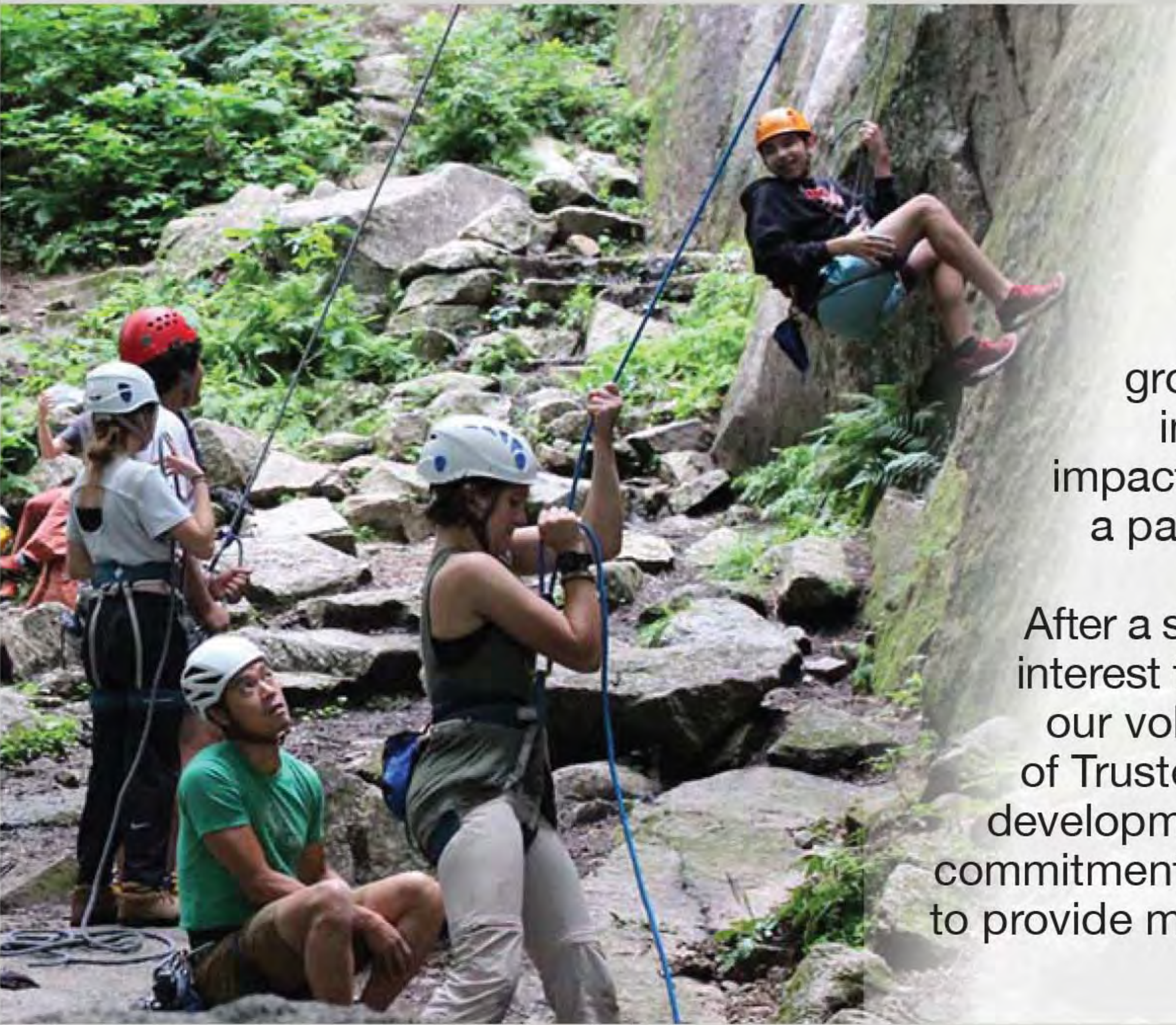


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We approach our 25th year of Kismet with a fierce determination to establish stability on every foothold in order to ensure another 25 years of programs.

Next summer we will provide seven weeks of programs including five returning groups and two new student groups. Each week, a returning student will also join as an intern at the Kismet house. Ultimately, we strive to be an impactful chapter in our students' lives and have them remain a part of the Kismet fabric as they move forward in their life.

After a successful year of volunteer programs and ever expanding interest from the community at large, we will continue to diversify our volunteer opportunities. We continue to expand our Board of Trustees to incorporate a range of talents bringing support in development, more in-person involvement with the program, and commitment to strategizing for the future. We plan to adjust staffing to provide more depth in the summer season for additional support.

THE FUTURE



THANK YOU

FOR YOUR DEDICATION AND SUPPORT!

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THANK YOU

Kismet is proud to be entering its 25th year of programs thanks to the trust and support of countless friends over the years.