



October 2025

Dear Pine Islanders,

There's an old adage that, for me, perfectly sums up the goal of a Pine Island summer: A teacher's job is to prepare the child for the path ahead, not to prepare the path for the child. The saying isn't new, but when I first heard it at a teachers' conference this summer, I immediately thought of the way that Pine Island prepared me for my path.

When I was thirteen and going for my Grand Oarsman rank in Rowing, I struggled (as so many do) with the "docking and mooring" block. The instructor took me out in a dory to help me master the maneuver. We worked all week on it, spending hours in the boat. I rowed and he sat in the back, offering tips and advice but never taking the oars. When I got frustrated, he never showed me special treatment or gave me a pass because I was struggling. Instead, I was given all the tools, knowledge, and time to master that skill on my own. "I FINALLY GOT IT!!!!" was the opening line of my letter home that week.

This teaching style has been a part of Pine Island's philosophy since 1902. I believe it's now more important than ever that boys get to experience this kind of learning environment.

Children today live in an overly engineered world, where structure and supervision often crowd out opportunities to build confidence and agency. It's a rare thing to have the space and time to develop grit and to learn through failure. The "habitats" where such experimentation is possible are dwindling.

I hope you'll join me in making a gift to Pine Island's 2025 Annual Fund to ensure the next generation of boys learn how to handle the rain, to master hard skills, and to prepare their own paths.

Akka Lakka!

Will Stack



*Camper (2012-14)*

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