

Here's a first look at the renovated, reopened Kripalu Center for Yoga & Health after January flood damage

By Clarence Fanto, The Berkshire Eagle Apr 9, 2024 2 min to read



Kripalu has reopened for programming with newly renovated spaces after a burst pipe in January closed the grounds in Stockbridge for 10 weeks. The center for yoga and health welcomed 450 guests, full capacity, on reopening weekend.

STEPHANIE ZOLLSHAN — THE BERKSHIRE EAGLE



STOCKBRIDGE — During a recent tour of Kripalu Center for Yoga & Health's renovated main lobby and dining hall, [CEO Robert Mulhall](#) recalled what it was like to see a 5,000-gallon cascade of water pouring out of the ceiling just over two months ago.

"This whole area had to be redone, but it looks beautiful," he said. "A tremendous amount of work was needed, and the team did a phenomenal job to make it all happen."



Kripalu Yoga & Health Center in Stockbridge spent an undisclosed amount on extensive repairs and renovations following a damaging flood caused by a burst pipe on Jan. 20.

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Major flood damage from a burst pipe on Jan. 20 in 5-degree weather forced the evacuation and relocation of several hundred guests and set off a 10-week shutdown of the yoga retreat center. Extensive repairs were needed to electrical systems, ceilings and walls in the main building.

Days after a swarm of contractors completed their tasks, Kripalu reopened on March 29 and hosted a capacity of 450 weekend guests.

The makeover includes not only the lobby, but also locker rooms, executive and staff offices, the call center where staffers handle phone reservations, hideaway retreat spaces for guests who need to maintain tech contact with the outside world, and the revamped main dining hall that was ground zero for the flood.



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Mulhall credited the reopening weekend's full house to pent-up demand for what Kripalu offers. Forty area residents attended programs on day passes last Thursday.

Advance reservations look strong for the next few months, he added. Mulhall said he was unable to provide a cost estimate for the repairs as invoices are still being collected along with insurance compensation pending for the loss of business.

He acknowledged there was a "significant" bottom line expense to cover the renovations; [initial preliminary estimates in February](#) put the total at well over \$100,000.



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But he voiced confidence that the overall financial impact will be limited.

"We don't have any financial fear for Kripalu and its sustainability and stability," Mulhall said. "It's back to normal."

Kripalu's staff of 350 was fully employed during the shutdown, he said, though some teams in housekeeping and food service were deployed to other tasks such as repainting all the guest bedrooms and other parts of the building unaffected by the flood damage.

Yoga teachers offered free lessons to staff members, while healing arts and massage specialists also provided treatments during the stressful time, said Mulhall, who joined Kripalu in 2019 and has been CEO since early 2021.

About 30 job openings, a typical number at any time, are being filled. Kripalu's staffing complement includes 380 full- and part-time employees.



Kripalu Yoga & Health Center CEO Robert Mulhall, said the 10-week shutdown allowed for other upgrades and deferred maintenance projects to the Stockbridge campus.

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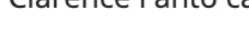
Although Kripalu's emphasis on [yoga training](#) remains unaltered, Mulhall said the organization is ramping up efforts to add more diversity to the staff and offer programming to benefit the LGBTQ+ communities. Collective community healing and well-being also are being emphasized, he added, as well as more accessible opportunities for area residents.

Last year, more than 10 percent of guests attended in person or online through free programs or scholarships, "a really big shift for us and something we want to continue," Mulhall said.

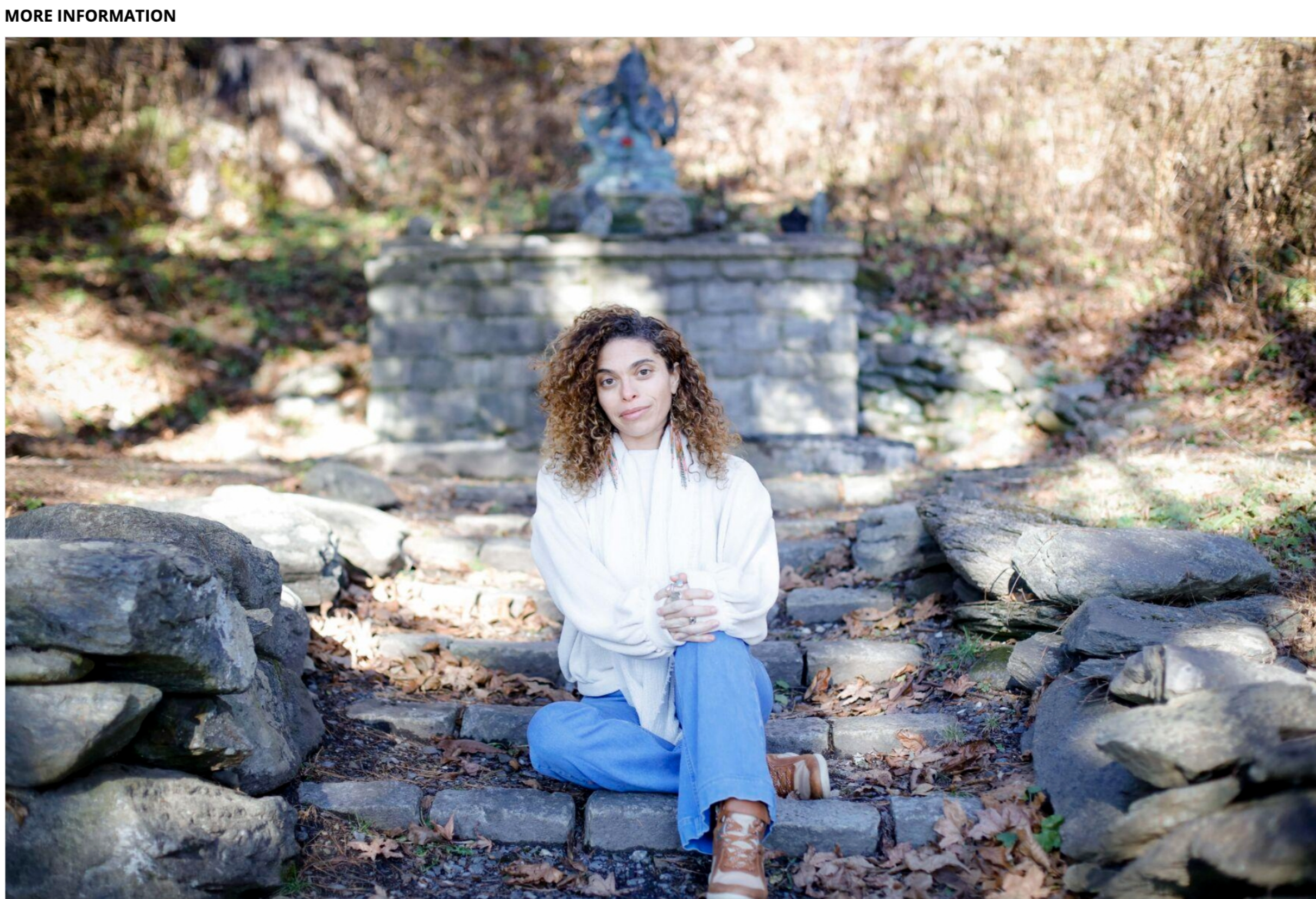
Mulhall said the silver lining of the flooding was they were able to take care of things in the building that they wouldn't normally be able to do with guests on the property.

"In a place like this, minimizing risks for the future is a never-ending journey with a building this size," he said. "For 10 weeks, like in a yoga class, we held a really hard posture, but we're feeling the benefits of it."

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Here's how one of Kripalu's leaders went from managing Alicia Keys to leading transformational leadership retreats in the Berkshires. After decades as a powerful music executive and Alicia Keys' manager, Eset Rose has built a new life at Kripalu Center for Yoga & Health, where she's director of creative strategy and programming.



Flooding damage at Kripalu was more extensive than initially believed. When will the yoga and health center reopen? After decades as a powerful music executive and Alicia Keys' manager, the yoga and health center in Stockbridge is spending more than \$100,000 on critical repair and restoration work, especially to waterlogged electrical systems.

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