

# CAMP RAMAH IN WISCONSIN

# מחנה רמה

FALL 2021 NEWSLETTER



"This entire camp season was a miraculous event. From the youngest camper to the oldest staff member, we re-learned what it is to be a community, to learn together, to support one another, and to celebrate joyful moments together."

*Meira Silverstein, Head of Performing Arts*



## Celebrating Joyful Moments



## From Jacob Cytryn, Executive Director



Jacob and Director of Operations Scott Topal help with food prep

Three months have passed since the last day of camp and yet I vividly recall the tears as campers said goodbye to all who shaped their lives this summer and will continue to impact them for decades to come. In that moment I knew that this summer was not that different from past Ramah summers. And I also knew that this summer was extraordinary in every sense of the word.

Conducting camp in the midst of a pandemic was truly not normal, and the experience we offered our campers was outstanding.

At Camp Ramah in Wisconsin we completed the entire summer with no cases of COVID-19 in camp, gifting our full-season campers with six weeks of mask-less activities and an oasis in the midst of the pandemic. At Ramah Day Camp, campers and staff were masked throughout the day, unmasking only for swimming, snacks and lunch. Thanks to the tremendous partnership of our camp families and staff, our COVID-19 protocols worked - providing over 750 children and teens with a summer of fun just when they needed it most.

One of the remarkable aspects of the summer in Conover was the realization of *Kibbutz Ramah*. We knew going into the summer

that, for various pandemic-related reasons, we would need to rely on our camp staff to do more than other summers. Once camp started, we realized quickly that without the European university students who typically staff our kitchen, we needed a lot of extra help. Many of our summer staff stepped up and took on food prep and kitchen clean-up tasks in addition to their roles as educators, staff trainers, activity staff, and counselors. This first component of Kibbutz Ramah was impressive and really appreciated – but it still was not enough to prepare and serve over 1,500 meals each and every day.

We then put out a call to our camp community and wow – did they answer! Nearly 70 alumni and camper parents spent a week or more in camp assisting in the kitchen under the guidance of our talented Executive Chef, Joe Pennington. We are incredibly grateful to all who worked so hard this summer to nourish the bodies and souls of our campers and staff. It was a tremendous group effort.

I now realize that this spirit of Kibbutz Ramah has lifted us up throughout the pandemic. It's seen in the extraordinary support from camp families, alumni, synagogues, foundations and federations. It is evident in the above-and-beyond work of our year-round and summer staff and the dedication of our board members. And with this tremendous help we accomplished the goal set forth during staff training week in June, providing campers with double the activities, double the friends, and double the fun.



## Introducing Lauren Mindel, Director of Camper Care and Inclusion

On October 1, Camp Ramah in Wisconsin took a giant leap forward in caring for and supporting all of our campers and staff when **Lauren Mindel** began her work as our first ever **Director of Camper Care and Inclusion**, a full-time, senior position in the organization. Lauren, who holds a Bachelor of Science in Human Development and Psychological Services from Northwestern University and a Masters in Social Work from the University of Chicago, most recently worked as a Child Welfare Clinician at JCFS Chicago. She has spent time as a camper, counselor, and Rosh Eidah (division head) at Camp Ramah in Canada and as a yoetzet (advisor to staff and campers) at Camp Ramah in California.

We are investing in this new position to emphasize the growing importance of several camper care initiatives: our camper intake process, our summer team of camper care professionals, our support for campers with disabilities and other special circumstances, and our reimaged approach to supporting the full-range of diversity found in the American Jewish community today.

## From David Kushnir, Board Chair



Opening day at our camps is always the most exciting time of the year. Our sites are pristine and our staff is prepared and eager to embrace our newest set of campers. The bus stops are full of energy with kids running around embracing friends they haven't seen since the prior summer. Parents often

carry that dual emotion of excitement for the experiences awaiting their children and nostalgia of realizing their children are growing up fast. That enthusiasm can also be seen at the airport runs bringing overnight campers from our outlying communities and on our local bus routes transporting our youngest campers to Ramah Day Camp.

The logistics of the past were no match for what happened on opening day in 2021. Because on top of the normal travel complications, we had to orchestrate all of our COVID testing and related protocols. Camper arrivals were staggered by eidot (age divisions). Families were asked to stay in their cars. Socializing had to be curtailed. I'm sure there were still many smiling faces, but they could not be seen under the masks.

But we did it. Our campers and staff made it to camp and they didn't let the COVID precautions stop them from having an amazing summer. Our year-round professionals had to reimagine some of our basic camp activities, like communal dining, singing and other group activities. They worked so hard to effectively implement the health and safety guidelines while maintaining the fun and sense of normalcy.

**We are proud to share that our camp protocols were published by the Centers for Disease Control in a study conducted by the medical committee of the Camp Ramah network. Dr. Mark Drexler, head of our medical committee, led the core research team, which collected data from all of the Ramah overnight camps in the United States.** Not only did this highlight the detail and successful execution of our COVID mitigation efforts, it established best practices for other camps and schools going forward. This reflects our long-standing tradition of being a leader in the camping world and also our willingness to

share our experiences with others. Thank you to Mark for his guidance and for the incredible amount of time he devotes to keeping our camps healthy and safe.

We are also so grateful to you, our community, for stepping up and helping in so many large and small ways. Your support continues to raise camp up and strengthen our beloved *Machane Ramah*. I also want to thank our summer staff, who worked incredibly hard under some challenging conditions. For them, days off looked different, schedules needed to be modified on short notice and they were asked to take on additional responsibilities at various times. We want our staff to know how much they were appreciated and to remind them of the positive impact that they had on their campers. Being on staff requires a tremendous commitment and, I know from my own experience, that it can be one of the most rewarding experiences of a lifetime.

With COVID protocols in place, we could not host any visitors this past summer. Our reunions were postponed along with opportunities to witness the magic of camp in person. Our Family Camp was also cancelled, which we know was a big disappointment to registered families and to our staff. We are eager to reschedule these events and once again be able to show off our campuses along with our vision for the future.

As we embark on our 75th summer, it is so reassuring to know that our core mission is still intact. We have successfully run our camps during a pandemic and now we look to build on that momentum going forward. Thank you to our remarkable community for your partnership in this endeavor and for your ongoing support.





# Reflections on



"There are some amazing athletes in camp – and it's not just about the homerun. It's about the cheering, and the support, and the hugging of both teams at the end of it. Every space in camp has such a potential and such thoughtful intentionality. We have basketball not only to make better basketball players and to learn the skill to make a 3-point shot. There's more to it. It's an opportunity to learn about sportsmanship, community, and enabling others to have their moments. And the kids know it."

– Shalom Orzach, Educational Consultant



"Because so many of our 13- and 14-year campers had their Bar or Bat Mitzvah moved online or otherwise impacted by the pandemic, our staff planned a series of events to honor this milestone in their lives. The highlight was a group aliyah during Thursday morning tefilot. We are so proud of them all for their resiliency and flexibility, and were thrilled to watch them get called up to the Torah together. There was singing, dancing, and even some early-morning candy."

– Liat Wasserman and Raphy Gendler,  
Rosh Shoafim and Rosh Bogrim



# Summer 2021



**The popular Mercatz Tarbut, a new cultural center bringing together visual arts and woodworking activities, features an artist's studio and the stunning NewBimah outdoor performance space.**

"During the pandemic many kids found ways to express themselves through art using whatever they could find around the house. When they got to camp and came into this amazing open new space with so many different materials and so many ways to be creative they really had a chance to let their inner artist really come out. I got to see their creations and how passionate they were about their art, and this really filled my summer in a meaningful way."

– Lena Ben-Gideon, Art Staff



"Counselors worked so hard this summer and had to be so resilient. They could tell their campers needed to have fun and they did everything to make it happen. The counselors created tons of excitement with all kinds of crazy and shticky activities and had so much fun with it that there was no way that the kids could not."

– Natalie Blitt, Rosh Mercatz





Enjoying an outdoor movie at sunset

## Shiluv – a program of the Ramah Tikvah Network

Since 1973, Camp Ramah in Wisconsin has proudly welcomed campers with unique challenges and disabilities as part of Tikvah and Atzmayim. During the 2021 season we successfully piloted a new approach to inclusion we call Shiluv (integration) that is a continuation of gradual changes we have made to our programs over the last decade in ongoing dialogue with camper families and experts in special education. This summer Shiluv provided opportunities for former Tikvah campers to live with their peers and participate in the day-to-day life of their eidah (age group), greatly enhancing our entire camp community and the experiences of campers in all eidot. For information on Shiluv and Atzmayim, please contact Margalit Siegel at [registrar@ramahwisconsin.com](mailto:registrar@ramahwisconsin.com).

## A Full and Wonderful Week at Camp

excerpted from a letter to parents by Meredith Weprin, Assistant Director of Special Needs Programs

July 2, 2021

Our Atzmayim vocational participants had a full and wonderful week at camp! We celebrated one participant's 21st birthday together by raising our glasses (of orange juice), sharing a wish for him, and eating birthday cake together! Following the birthday celebration we sang songs together with Justin, our song leader, as we said goodbye to Shabbat and did Havdalah together and welcomed in a new week.

We are in a good camp routine. Participants are all doing their own laundry at camp. Everyone is getting more comfortable in their jobs at camp and gaining independence. We're looking forward to our first cooking class in the mitbachon teaching kitchen this week.

Our day off in camp was really relaxing and fun! We went on a pontoon boat on Lake Buckatabon and later baked cookies and brownies together. A real highlight was hanging out in the staff cafe where two of our participants work. We played games with the drama staff, and we ended our day off with the campwide Zimriya song fest. We loved singing alongside our friends on staff and are excited to spend more time with them at our Shabbat kiddush.

We have been joining Nivonim (11th graders) for tefilot on Mondays, Thursdays, and Shabbat. This week we had a peulat erev (night activity) with Nivonim where we all did Karaoke together. Everyone participated and we had so much fun!





# New for 2022 – More Ways Than Ever to Have Fun!

## New Session Flexibility for Campers Entering 3rd – 6th Grade!

Whether a camper is with us for one week or for eight, one thing is constant: our commitment to making 2022 the best summer ever. We offer a variety of flexible sessions for our youngest campers and full-season sessions for campers entering 7th – 11th grade. If you have scheduling restraints for your camper, please contact Executive Director Jacob Cytryn at [jcytryn@ramahwisconsin.com](mailto:jcytryn@ramahwisconsin.com) to discuss flexible arrangements.

We are proud to offer the **Shiluv Inclusion Program, a program of the Ramah Tikvah Network**, for campers who may benefit from additional support due to a variety of special circumstances and needs. The Atzmayim vocational program, designed to strengthen social and vocational skills, is open to high school graduates ages 18-21.

Ramah Day Camp in Chicagoland offers 4- and 8-week sessions for campers entering pre-K – 6th grade, along with a variety of

joint programs with Camp Ramah in Wisconsin.

For campers entering 7th – 8th grade we offer the Gesher session and a CIT session is offered for entering 9th-10th graders.

We want to help you find the right program for your camper! Please contact Margalit Segal at [registrar@ramahwisconsin.com](mailto:registrar@ramahwisconsin.com) or go to [enroll.ramahwisconsin.com](http://enroll.ramahwisconsin.com) or [ramahday.com](http://ramahday.com) for details on dates, rates, and scholarship availability.

Do you  
live outside the Midwest?  
Our sessions are  
available to children  
of alumni  
regardless of  
current residence.



ENROLL TODAY!

## New Activities!

From old favorites like swimming and the ropes course to new adventures described below, Camp Ramah in Wisconsin offers a wide range of activities to suit every kind of interest. Campers can pick up new skills, improve existing ones, and squeeze more fun into 24 hours than they ever thought possible.

### Trail Biking

in the beautiful Northwoods!



### Tubing

on Lake Buckatabon!



### Ninja Warrior Course

taking obstacle courses to a whole new level!



**Enrollment for the 2022 season is now open. We can't wait to welcome your camper to Ramah - where the fun never stops and friendships last forever. Check out dates and rates and get more info at [enroll.ramahwisconsin.com](http://enroll.ramahwisconsin.com)**

# Ramah Connect!

We're excited to welcome so many alumni to Ramah Connect! The app is great for professional networking across the vast Ramah Wisconsin alumni base, reconnecting with old friends through the alumni directory, and viewing vintage camp photos. Join today to stay connected at [Ramahconnect.com](http://Ramahconnect.com). Here's an update from around the Ramah community!

## Births

Avniel Simcha, daughter of Sarah Palmer and **Aryeh Bernstein (Nivo 1991)**

Logan and Miles, sons of Jennifer and **Gabe Gershowitz (Nivo 1997)**

Isabella Vivian, daughter of Marina Arutyunyan and **Gabe Roth (Nivo 1998)**

Shai, daughter of **Shira (Gorenstein) (Nivo 1999)** and Mor Averbuch

Emily Miriam, daughter of Tanya and **Mike Eisenwasser (Nivo 2000)**

Isaac Avery, son of Felice and **Michael Schur (Nivo 2000)**

Gavi Matan, son of Orly and **Elan Zinkow (Nivo 2001)**

Sarina Anna Mira, daughter of **Aliza (Rudolph) (Nivo 2001)** and Ben Scheier

Meital, daughter of Rabbi Sarah Shulman and **Nate Bankirer (Nivo 2002)**

Yael Fela, daughter of **Ruth Igielnik (Nivo 2002)** and Ben Wieder

Son of Adi and **Brian Finkel (Nivo 2003)**

Elliana Sidney, daughter of **Hannah (Berkowicz) and Brian Poggrund (both Nivo 2005)**

Elior, son of Heather and **Rabbi Jeremy Fineberg (Nivo 2005)**

Liba Naamah, daughter of Rachel and **Jacob Slutsky (Nivo 2005)**

Ezra Harrison, son of **Lauren (Vandersluis) (Nivo 2005)** and Scott Kaplan

Lev, son of **Talia (Ribnick) (Nivo 2006)** and Adam Baruch

Ruby Lane, daughter of **Miriam (Thorne) (Nivo 2006)** and Joey Heller

## Wedding

**Lilli Flink (Nivo 2006)** and Ariel Platt

## Engagements

Christina and **Stu Miller (Nivo 1995)**

Melissa McDonald and **Lucas Isleman (Nivo 2000)**

Antonia and **Mathew Rotenberg (Nivo 2003)**

Allie Rakos and **Jeff Kahn (Nivo 2004)**

Richelle Caya and **Danny Robinson (Nivo 2006)**

Hayley Bemel and **Andrew Heisler (Nivo 2008)**



If you'd like a onesie for your new baby, contact Shaina Sugar at [ssugar@ramahwisconsin.com](mailto:ssugar@ramahwisconsin.com)

### iPhone

1. Go to the app store and download the "Graduway Community" app
2. Search for "Camp Ramah in Wisconsin"
3. Sign in/Register

### Android

1. Go to the Google Play store and download the "Camp Ramah in Wisconsin" app
2. Sign in/Register

### Computer Browser

1. Visit [www.ramahconnect.com](http://www.ramahconnect.com)
2. Sign in/Register



## In the News – Congratulations to:

**Michael Dell (Nivo 1980)** on the publication of his book *Play Nice But Win*.

**Eytan Fox (Nivo 1980)** on the release of his new film "Sublet."

**Tomer Rothschild (Nivo 1988)** on being featured in Fortune Magazine.

**Jeremy Sohn (Nivo 1990)** on starting a new position as managing partner at Magnetar Capital.

**Leeatt Rothschild (Nivo 1995)** on her business Packed with Purpose being ranked on the Inc. 5000 list.

**Mike Siegel (Nivo 1995)** on the airline he founded being featured on "The Points Guy."

**Adam Parker (Nivo 2000)** on starting a new position as Director of Development at The ARK in Chicago.

**Brian Finkel (Nivo 2003)** on his company being featured on "Jewish Insider."

**Alexa (Ehrlich) Kelman (Nivo 2004)** on being named as one of Oy!Chicago's 36 Under 36.

**Ian Shaffer (Nivo 2004)** on his new role in the Real Estate group at Much Shelist, P.C.

**Adam Parritz (Nivo 2007)** for being named to the board of directors of the Jewish Federation of the Bluegrass, which serves the Kentucky Jewish community.

**Rabbi Eddie Bernstein** on starting a new position as Chaplain at Boca Raton Regional Hospital.

## Our Sincere Condolences

To the family of **Betty F. Rozenfeld**, Board of Trustees member and Ramah parent, grandparent and great-grandparent, who passed away in July 2021.

To the family of **Paul Palnik**, Rosh Omanut and Creative Director of Studio Arts (1995-2011) and Ramah parent, who passed away in August 2021.

To the family of **Dr. Robert Minkus**, camp doctor (1984-1995), Ramah parent and grandparent, who passed away in September 2021.

To the family of **Rabbi Arthur Oleisky**, first decade alumnus, who passed away in October 2021.

To the family of **Lottie Goldberg Weinstein**, wife of former National Ramah President Bert B. Weinstein, Ramah parent and grandparent, who passed away in October 2021.



# Celebrating Ramah Past, Present and Future!

Camp Ramah in Wisconsin is turning 75 in 2022! Camp today is exactly the same as any alum remembers – the kikar, the sunsets, Kabbalat Shabbat by the lake, and of course the fun and the friendships.

And there is so much that is fresh and innovative. Ramah offers new flexible sessions for entering 3rd-6th graders and over 50 exciting activities to choose from - with tubing, trail biking and a Ninja Warrior obstacle course debuting next summer.

In recent years the camp has been completely renovated, and state-of-the art facilities include an Arts and Outdoor Performance Center, a Nivonim (11th grade) campus, and a spacious dining complex featuring a diverse, healthy menu.



**In the months ahead look for info on ways to reunite and reconnect in 2022. Our hope is to celebrate Ramah's 75th anniversary virtually and in person, including alumni reunions that were postponed due to the pandemic.**



Rabbinical student Adam Berman (Nivo 2006), who taught at camp last summer, was excited to see the bench he painted in Solelim is still in use!



We hope to welcome those who were registered for Family Camp 2021 to **Family Camp 2022 on August 11-15** along with additional participants. For more info contact Family Camp Director Robin Rubenstein at [rrubenstein@ramahwisconsin.com](mailto:rrubenstein@ramahwisconsin.com) or at 312.690.8305.



# Donor Recognition

**October 1, 2020 – September 30, 2021**

\* indicates Camp Ramah in Wisconsin Va'ad committee member

\*\* indicates my.ramahwisconsin.com peer-to-peer fundraising campaign

♦ indicates Legacy Society member

## Shomrei Ramah

### \$150,000 and above

Anonymous (1)  
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Jeanette Weinberg Foundation

## Director's Circle

### \$100,000 and above

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## President's Circle

### \$50,000 and above

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**View a complete list of donors in the online edition of *Machanenu Ramah* at [ramahwisconsin.com](http://ramahwisconsin.com).**

## Buckatabon

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Gifts of \$18,000 and above



Camp Ramah in Wisconsin relies on the partnership and generosity of corporate donors each and every year. Corporate donations are recognized on multiple platforms throughout the year. Please consider whether your workplace or business can join the community partners supporting Ramah's mission. For more information contact Sam Caplan at [scaplan@ramahwisconsin.com](mailto:scaplan@ramahwisconsin.com) or 312-690-8332.





## Camp Ramah in Wisconsin has been a blessing for our family.

Our Ramah journey began in 2004 when I was on a bus on a JUF Nachshon men's mission to Israel. Former Ramah Wisconsin President Jeff Kopin sat next to me, introduced himself and asked me to consider Ramah for our sons and for our family. He passionately spoke of camp as the place where our kids would make their best friends, experience serious Jewish literacy and education, develop a deep love for Judaism, an appreciation for the importance of a close and embracing Jewish community, and create an even deeper personal connection to Israel. Jeff assured me that we would be warmly welcomed, and that Ramah would impact our entire family. And it turns out... Jeff was right.

Several years after that Israel bus ride we enrolled our son Steven as a Bogrim camper. He loved Ramah immediately, spent two more summers as a camper and worked on staff as Rosh Shira (Head Song Leader). Our oldest son Josh also worked at Ramah for three years as a cabin counselor and Rosh Shira. Our youngest son Daniel began at Ramah Day Camp and continued at the overnight camp through his camper years and then on staff including this past summer as a Nivonim counselor. Our sons developed deep friendships, and all loved their experience at Ramah.

Susan and I have been grateful for all of these Ramah blessings and more.

Soon after Steven began as a camper I reached out to Rabbi David Soloff to express our interest in partnering with camp to enhance music and song leading at camp. We wanted to help raise the level of joyous and exciting Jewish music at camp and to enhance musical tefillah and song sessions after meals. We found in Rabbi Soloff an enthusiastic, open-minded and open-hearted partner. That strong partnership has continued to this day with enthusiastic, thoughtful support from Jacob Cytryn as well.

I was honored some years ago to be invited to join the Ramah board, which has been a labor of love. I was asked to lead the



From left: Susan, Josh, Daniel, Steven and Marc Sacks

Givah fundraising campaign, an effort which successfully built the beautiful new Nivonim campus. Susan has contributed significantly to camp as well, developing the popular "extreme beading" camp workshops with her friend Karen Budin and with encouragement and support from Rosh Omanut Abby Maeir.

This past summer Susan and I worked at camp for a week on kitchen duty. It was the most inspiring, deeply connecting experience I have had in all my years of involvement at Ramah. Our efforts were clearly needed in the kitchen and we worked long, hard hours, but it was truly a labor of love and joy. Along with the other parent volunteers we loved seeing the happy faces of campers and staff as we served the meals and heard the stories of their amazing summer at camp.

Ramah has indeed been a blessing for our family. In addition to our annual support, we have proudly joined the Ramah Legacy Society to ensure that future generations can experience the deep friendships and joyous Judaism that we have found at camp.

*Marc Sacks*

**We gratefully recognize new members  
Karen (Herstig) and Jeffry Gerson to the Legacy Society.**

## What will your legacy be?

By including Camp Ramah in Wisconsin in your will, trust, retirement account, life insurance policy, or estate plan you will forever be remembered as a devoted supporter of Ramah. Please join over 150 Legacy Society members who have completed a Declaration of Intent and help ensure Ramah's vibrancy well into the future!

### Declaration of Intent

In the Jewish tradition of sharing our blessings, I/we take deep satisfaction in declaring my/our intent to help Camp Ramah in Wisconsin provide for the needs of future generations of Jewish children.

☐ I/We have made provision, or

☐ I/We will make provision to include Camp Ramah as beneficiary in:

☐ a bequest in my/our will

☐ a deferred lifetime gift

☐ a life insurance gift

☐ through a trust fund and/or foundation

☐ through a retirement fund

☐ Please add my/our name(s) to the Ramah Wisconsin Legacy Society.

**Print your name as you would like to be listed in the**

**Ramah Wisconsin Legacy Society** \_\_\_\_\_

☐ I/We do not want to be listed.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Please mail to Camp Ramah in Wisconsin Legacy Society, 67 E. Madison Street, Suite 1905, Chicago, IL 60603 or email to [LHoffenberg@ramahwisconsin.com](mailto:LHoffenberg@ramahwisconsin.com).**

*Please consult your attorney or tax advisor for professional guidance in this area.*

### Ways to Give

**Camp Ramah in Wisconsin and Ramah Day Camp provide outstanding opportunities for joy, growth, and friendship in a vibrant Jewish community of peers.** Please support this meaningful mission – there are many ways you can help!

- Make a gift by check or credit card, one time or monthly
- Make a gift of appreciated stock
- Become a corporate sponsor
- Donate through your employer's matching gift program
- Make a qualified charitable contribution from your IRA
- Join the Legacy Society by completing a Declaration of Intent
- Celebrate a birthday or lifecycle event with a DIY campaign
- Donate a brick on the Nivonim walkway

**And there are two new ways to give!**



Donate Crypto



Cars for Camp

Donate crypto currency    Donate a car

For more info, go to [ramahwisconsin.com/ways2give](https://ramahwisconsin.com/ways2give) and [give.ramahwisconsin.com](https://give.ramahwisconsin.com) or contact Sam Caplan, Chief Development Officer, at [scaplan@ramahwisconsin.com](mailto:scaplan@ramahwisconsin.com) or 312.690.8332.





## From Talia Derman, Director



As I took one final look around the camp at our campers' smiling faces on August 6th, I breathed a sigh of relief, happiness and exhaustion knowing that we had accomplished something amazing. This summer was unlike any other at Ramah Day Camp for a multitude of reasons. Of course, the obvious reason is the pandemic that remains our reality today.

Although it may have been

especially difficult for our team to prepare for the summer - new schedules, policies, health screenings, masks, sanitizer, etc - our campers did not feel a change in the ruach (spirit) that was very much alive in our campsite throughout the summer. Our staff and the entire camp community came together in such a powerful way to make this summer happen because we all knew that our campers needed a fun, carefree summer - and with hard work and dedication, we were able to deliver a very special one.

Another reason this summer was unique is that it was my first as the director. My career background is atypical but surprisingly relevant for a camp leader and surely no one can be prepared to run a summer camp in the COVID era. Needless to say, this summer challenged me in ways I could never have imagined and also provided deep, meaningful rewarding moments. Helping a shy 5th grader find their voice in Talents with Talia, showing a 1st grader how to dive into the pool and watching a proud 3rd grader run up to me to offer me a cup of guacamole he made himself



were just a few of the many moments that drive my passion to ensure Ramah Day Camp continues to grow and thrive in the coming years.

As we look towards Kayitz 2022 and beyond, I am grateful to everyone that played a part in making this summer amazing - our staff, camper families, donors, medical committee, and the many organizations that provide all kinds of support: National Ramah, The Harold Grinspoon Foundation and JCamp180, the Foundation for Jewish Camp, and many more. We already have some new and exciting things planned for the 2022 season (and some old favorites too!) so continue to check in as we prepare for another summer unlike any other... in the best way!

### Camp Ramah in Wisconsin

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Daniella Elyashar, Assistant Director

Talia Derman, Director, Ramah Day Camp

Scott Topal, Director of Operations

Lauren Mindel, Director of Camper Care and Inclusion

Sam Caplan, Chief Development Officer

Rabbi David Soloff, Director Emeritus

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A summer at Ramah Day Camp in Wheeling, Illinois, is filled with endless opportunities for joy, growth, inclusion and connection – not to mention great friendships. Campers entering pre-kindergarten through sixth grade enjoy sports, swimming, music, cookouts, arts & crafts and so much more! Contact us at [info@ramahday.com](mailto:info@ramahday.com) to register and learn more about our Sha'ar Hebrew immersion program, Gesher program for 7th-8th graders, and Counselor-in Training program for 9th-10th graders. Transportation from the city and suburbs is provided.