

Camp Is Like a Family

machaneh k'mishpachah **מחנה כמשפחה**



Camp Ramah in California | 2020 Annual Report





“The relationships I have made at Ramah continue outside of camp. My Bat Mitzvah was during COVID, and I could only celebrate in person with two girls and their families. The people I chose are both Ramah campers who I know will be my friends for life.”

– RAMAH CAMPER

2020

TWO THOUSAND TWENTY WAS A YEAR FOR MANY THINGS: caution and concern. Distance and delay. Virtual work and remote learning. But for members of the Camp Ramah family, COVID-19 also brought other, more welcome developments, like a renewed focus on communal commitment and mutual responsibility. Despite tremendous challenge, the pandemic left us, above all else, grateful for each other.

When it became clear that *kayitz* 2020 would not be a regular summer, we faced some difficult decisions — operationally, logistically and programmatically. We knew we would be forced to be physically apart, yet thanks to the incredible investment of donors, board and staff, we were able to lean on one another for critical support.

With camp closed, and without revenue from our retreat facilities, we were under significant financial strain. Your response was overwhelming. As educators and parents, we teach our children about concern for others in our community, and you, our *mishpachah* — our beloved family — walked the talk, offering generosity, creativity and a clear-eyed vision of the work that needed to get done. Thanks to your assistance, we could look long term, not only finding innovative ways to keep kids engaged during a long pandemic summer, but also planning for a time when we could open safely again.

We are deeply thankful for your ongoing partnership. Together, we weathered the storm, emerging with a sense of common purpose to bring *Machaneh Ramah* back even stronger than before.

B'shalom,

Ellen Brown
CHAIR, BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Rabbi Joe Menashe
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Q&A with Janine Winkler Lowy

Through its landmark **Masah Incentive**, the Winkler Lowy Foundation is supporting Camp Ramah and investing in a dynamic Jewish future. The unique grant provides an escalating financial subsidy to *Tzophim*, *Kochavim* and *Machon* campers (as well as 14–16 year-old *Amitzim* campers) as a way to make their Ramah journeys more accessible and affordable. Donor and Ramah partner Janine Winkler Lowy shares her thoughts on why camp matters — and how it can transform young people's lives.



Question: What are the primary goals driving your family's philanthropy?

Answer: The major focus of our foundation is Jewish education. We aim to shore up strong existing programs and help to create new programs, like the Masah Incentive, to support the changing dynamics of the Jewish community everywhere. We hope our foundation can play a part in that important endeavor.

Question: What inspired your decision to launch the Masah Incentive?

Answer: Jewish camping is credited as one of the most important sources for the formation of Jewish identity, as well as future Jewish leadership and communal involvement. Living and breathing Jewish life with other Jewish kids for four or eight weeks each summer is the ultimate experiential education. Our foundation supports grants that create incentives for new or returning campers. The Masah

Incentive asks the campers themselves to play a role in the application process and to make a commitment to complete their full Ramah journey through their Machon year.

Masah Incentive offers campers a generous tuition subsidy outside the regular financial aid process.

- *Tzophim* & 14 year-old *Amitzim*: \$360
- *Kochavim* & 15 year-old *Amitzim*: \$500
- *Machon* & 16 year-old *Amitzim*: \$750

Question: How has Ramah impacted your own family's life?

Answer: All of my children spent their summers at Ramah, participated in Ramah Seminar and returned to camp as *madrichim*. The impact of their relationship with Ramah is apparent in every facet of their lives, and by association, my own. The

lifelong bond they share with friends; the songs that have become part of our own observances and traditions; the special ties they have forged with visiting *mischlachat*; cementing a place for the State of Israel in their hearts and minds — these are just some examples of how camp has helped shape their Jewish identities. We want other families to experience Ramah's impact the way our family has for the last 25 years.

Question: What, in your view, makes Ramah so special?

Answer: Camp Ramah is such a multi-generational space. I have attended Visitors Day countless times for my children, and now that I am a grandmother, I hear my kids talk about how fun Visitors Day will be when their own sons and daughters are at Ramah. I know many of them will one day take leadership positions in the Ramah community as a result of this continuing relationship.

Staying Connected

We refer to Ramah as “the journey for a lifetime” for a reason: As campers make their way into adulthood, they continue to nurture ties and relationships first forged in Ojai. Our alumni community is a treasured part of the Ramah family, and camp alumni remain engaged throughout their lifetimes.

This year, despite the obstacles presented by COVID-19, the Ramah Alumni Steering Committee was as active as ever. The committee was proud to present the Ramah Directors Panel, a discussion moderated by Rabbi Joe and featuring current Camp Director Ariella Moss Peterseil, as well as former camp directors Rabbi Glenn Karonsky and Rabbi Ed Feinstein. Other recent alumni events included a young alumni Shabbat dinner.

Ezra Ba’Ir, Digital Edition

Through *Ezra Ba’Ir* (Ezra in the City), young adults with special needs find meaningful, paid work in LA’s Jewish community. A partnership between Ramah and The Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles, the program was established in 2018 and has secured internships for participants across a wide variety of Jewish communal institutions, from schools, to synagogues, to JCCs.

When the pandemic hit, *Ezra Ba’Ir* paused in-person internships for the year, pivoting to a twice-per-month online vocational learning experience for 12 young adults. Together, this cohort collaborated to build independent living skills, exploring topics such as budgeting, healthy eating, job interview skills and workplace behavior.

During summer 2020, the program offered a two-week virtual summer camp, serving 19 campers and staffed by 14 counselors.

#Partnership Gets #Results

Collaborating with the Legacy Heritage Fund, Camp Ramah is proud to participate in #Partnership. The program provides congregants of Shomrei Torah Synagogue and Temple Aliyah, both located in the west San Fernando Valley, with Ramah-style programming, as well as Legacy Heritage Camperships to help first-time campers start their Ramah journeys. We are excited to be in our third year of the program and look forward to many exciting events ahead!

An Exceptional Friend, An Enduring Memory

Rabbi Micah Caplan z”l — former camper, *tzevet* member, rabbi and parent — embodied the best of Camp Ramah. His passion for our *kehillah* spanned more than three decades, and his untimely passing last summer, at the age of 44, was a tragic loss to everyone in our community.

As a rabbi at Congregation Or Tzion in Scottsdale, Arizona, Micah inspired kids to spend their summers in Ojai. “He was like a Pied Piper,” Ramah board member (and close friend and congregant of Micah) Alison Feinberg recalls. “When he started, we had been sending only six kids to Camp Ramah; suddenly we were sending 60. Micah was incredibly special.”

To honor his memory, family and friends are dedicating the *Rabbi Micah Caplan z”l Makom Mifgash*, a dynamic teaching space on the Hill, across from the BKR, with shady trees to protect from the summer sun and comfortable seating that will invite campers and staff to congregate and build meaningful relationships through Torah. The *Makom Mifgash* will be infused with Micah’s spirit — his love of learning and deep discussion, his passion to bring people together and his commitment to grow and strengthen the Ramah family.

Ohr Lanu Online

Thirteen years ago, with seed funding from the Jewish Community Foundation, Camp Ramah launched Camp Ohr Lanu for families that have children with disabilities. Today, thanks to continued support from The Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles, Ohr Lanu has become integral to the fabric of the Ramah community.

Like so many other programs across the country and around the world, Ohr Lanu went virtual this year. In August 2020, 20 families came together to celebrate Kabbalat Shabbat, and parents had a chance to hang out for an evening of trivia and fun. The weekend ended with an Ohr Lanu favorite: the all-family talent show! Each Ohr Lanu family received a Ramah calendar and care package, complete with Ramah muffins, Ramah Mad Libs and a challah.

The innovative programming continued in December, with a family Havdalah and sing-along with our song leader, Jonathan Bayer. We also hosted a Chanukah-themed family cooking class. Taught by Danny Corsun from Culinary Kids Academy, five families gathered to bake donuts and homemade jam.

From Struggle to Strength

THE GLOBAL PANDEMIC POSED AN EXISTENTIAL THREAT TO SUMMER CAMPS EVERYWHERE. If facilities were unable to open, could they continue to exist? For Camp Ramah, the situation was serious, leading to a multi-million dollar shortfall and a retrenchment of expenses across the board.

As Ramah grappled with these significant challenges, our community lifted its voice in a chorus of support. “This was a time of high anxiety and panic for all of us, and we took a real financial hit,” says Ellen Brown, chair of Ramah’s board of directors. “But

the response from our Ramah family was truly remarkable, starting with our executive leadership, who worked overtime to deal with the evolving crisis. It was also incredible to know we had the backing of donors at all levels — people really stepped up and gave generously to help us close the gap in our budget and get back on firm financial footing.”

Those donors included philanthropic organizations like The Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles, the Foundation for Jewish Camping and JCamp 180, a program of the Harold Grinspoon Foundation, which offered a matching grant of 50 cents for every dollar raised, up to \$229,000 — a goal that was quickly met.

“We were spurred into action because Ramah was in dire need of funds, and we believe supporting camp is critical for Jewish continuity. Because of the high cost of education, a lot of kids aren’t going to Jewish day schools, so camp is their only exposure to something Jewish.”

— SHEILA BARAN SPIWAK



Inspired by JCamp 180, numerous individual contributors launched challenges of their own. Long-time Ramah backer and board member Sheila Baran Spiwak and her husband Alan teamed up with other current and legacy Ramah families on a \$375,000 match.

Ramah also benefitted from large numbers of families converting their tuition for summer 2020 to tax-deductible contributions. Aaron and Judy Findley were early to decide. “My wife and I met through Camp Ramah, and it’s home to many of our cherished memories,” Aaron says. “When we realized how COVID was adversely impacting camp, we wanted to find a way to acknowledge Ramah’s importance, not only to us but also to the entire Jewish community.”

Rabbi Joe Menashe, Ramah’s executive director, says roughly half of families donated part or all of their tuition. The generosity added up fast. “Thanks to the coming together of our community, we managed to close the fiscal year without a deficit, which was unimaginable just a few months earlier,” he says. “It’s such a meaningful tribute to the impact camp has on people’s lives.”

Camp Ramah Comes Home

When it became clear that camp would remain closed during summer 2020, our leadership and staff sprang into action, creating virtual summer programming that would bring Ramah directly into people's homes. *Ramah BaBayit* was an unqualified success, attracting 200 attendees to our "minicamp" and countless others to our introduction to camp program, *Ta'am* (Taste) *Ramah*.

Over 22 days, staff members ran 74 unique programs and activities — not including minicamp, which brought each *edah* together six times for two hours each. Their dedication and hard work yielded tangible benefits. As one parent put it, "The pandemic has been so hard on my child — not going to school, not seeing friends and

especially not going to camp! She went to bed picking the clothes out for the next day, getting up with a smile and an air of excitement she hasn't had in four months."

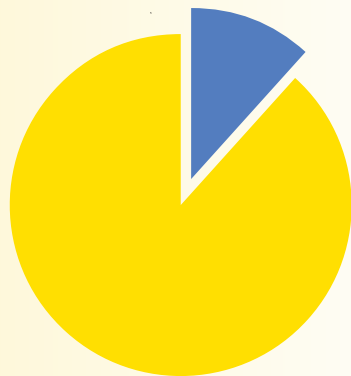
In addition to virtual camp, Ramah hosted multiple Kabbalat Shabbat and Havdalah services, attracting between 50 and 120 participants at every event. We were clearly filling a need!

We also sought out other ways to engage members of the Ramah community. Thanks to generous support from Alice and Nahum Lainer, we were able to send every camper a 2020 t-shirt, as well as lawn signs to our oldest chanichim and postcards for campers to use to keep in touch with their friends.



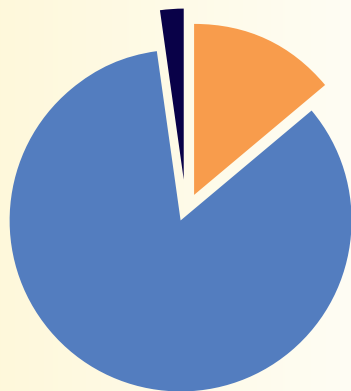
Financial Summary

The generosity of our donors, partner foundations and the Jewish Community Resource Investment Fund (JCRIF), as well as access to federal funding, allowed us to sustain our organization through this uncertain time.



2020 REVENUE

- Summer: \$0
- Non-Summer: \$734,668
- Contributions: \$5,557,253

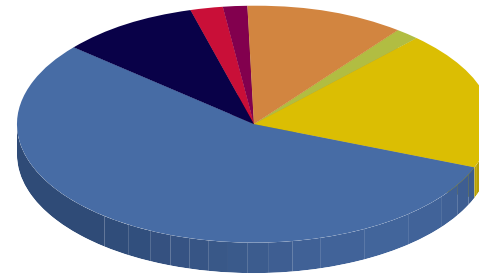


2020 EXPENSES

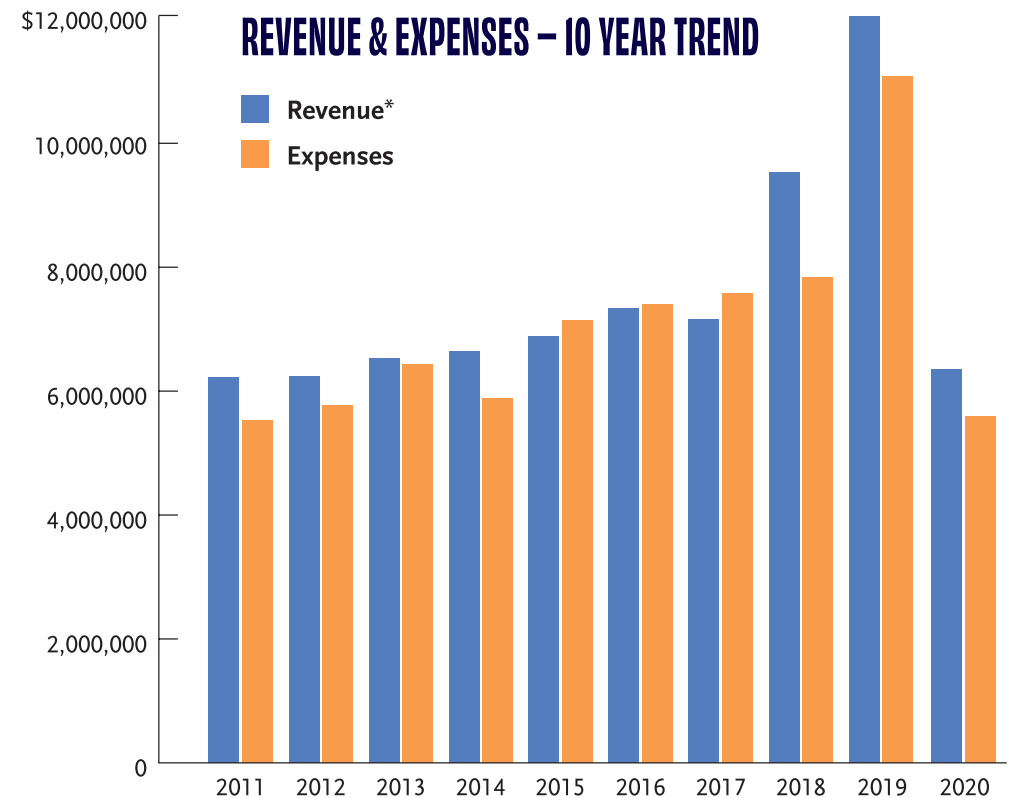
- Program: \$776,926
- Operations: \$4,645,028
- Development: \$112,784

2020 FUNDRAISING

Total: \$5,557,253



- Unrestricted: \$1,061,162
- COVID-19 Fund: \$3,066,802
- COVID-19 Tuition Conversion: \$524,229
- Scholarship: \$127,281
- Tikvah: \$85,492
- Capital Projects / Restricted Funds: \$610,186
- Endowment: \$81,881



As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, camp was forced to close its doors and cease all year-round activities and programs (including summer camp), scale back its operations, reduce staffing and refund prepaid program revenue. Despite these challenges, we continued to invest in supporting employees and positioning Ramah for the future.

*Revenues include restricted funds for both Capital and Endowment.



Virtual Gala Builds Real Connections

CAMP RAMAH'S DECEMBER 2020 GALA WAS UNLIKE ANY OTHER YEAR'S. While we missed being together in person, we gathered on Zoom with our Ramah family, creating a feeling of community and joy despite the virtual nature of the event.

Emceed by alumnus Ethan Stern, the gala celebrated the amazing professional team who led us through a difficult year with intention and transparency: Rabbi Joe Menashe, Randy Michaels, Ariella Moss Peterseil, Aviva Levine Jacobs, Elana Naftalin-Kelman and John Magoulas. It was a wonderful evening full of stories, camp magic and connection, with 300 Zoom screens featuring Ramahniks from all over the world.

Our communal efforts at the gala raised over \$400,000 toward Ramah's COVID-19 Fund, which helped to sustain camp and to leave a legacy for future generations of chanichim.

Chair, Board of Directors
Ellen Brown

Development Chair
Karmi Monsher

Celebration Chair
Lesley Wolman

Celebration Co-Chairs
Nancy & Scott Beiser
Ilana & Mark Meskin
Rachel & Dr. Lee Rosen
Gwen & Jeremy Rosenthal



"From the minute I leave camp, I want to go back. It's where I feel safe, and I can be me. Ramah is my happy place."

— RAMAH CAMPER

Makom for Machon

JUST AS COVID-19 UPENDED REGULAR BUSINESS OPERATIONS, so too did it slow the pace of progress on construction of our new multipurpose space — the Goldstine Machon Shetach. Fortunately, the pause was only temporary, and we are finally seeing light at the end of the tunnel, with a public hearing and forward motion expected soon.

Planned for an area immediately north of the soccer field on property purchased in 2016, the Goldstine Machon Shetach will feature new, state-of-the-art camper housing and a much-needed indoor gathering space. We are currently working on securing a conditional use permit from Ventura County; this will give us the go-ahead to begin building in earnest.

We are grateful to the expert team shepherding us through this process: Steve Welton of Suzanne Elledge Planning and Permitting Services, Jacquelyn D. Ruffin of Myers, Widders, Gibson, Jones & Feingold, LLP and Jane Carrol of Jane Carrol Design.

As we move ahead, we look forward to keeping you posted — and we extend our thanks for your ongoing support. Your past and future contributions will enable us to complete the project as quickly as possible.

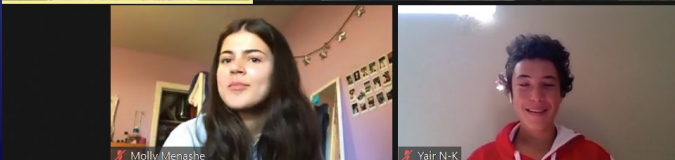
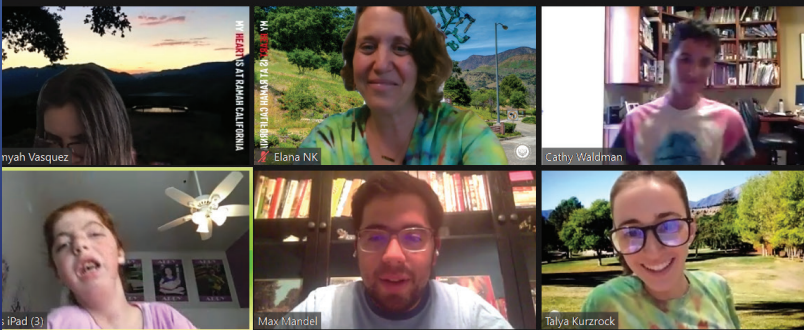
For more information or to support this capital campaign please contact John Magoulas at 818-668-2929 or John@ramah.org.

First, Sleepaway. Now, All Day.

TRADITIONALLY, CAMP RAMAH HAS BEEN AN OVERNIGHT EXPERIENCE. That remains the core of our community: *chanichim* living together for weeks at a time, building lasting friendships and memories. But we are also eager to serve kids for whom sleepaway camp is not a viable option, and we are thrilled to announce three major charitable commitments to provide seed funding for a Ramah day camp in Los Angeles.

With visionary support from Rachel and Lee Rosen, the Diane and Guilford Glazer Philanthropies and the Legacy Heritage Fund, the new day camp will be just the fifth in the United States within the Ramah system. It is slated to launch in summer 2022.





Sharing the Joy

JENNIFER KATTLER TRILLING IS PASSIONATE ABOUT CAMP RAMAH.

If facilities were unable to open, could they continue to exist? For Camp Ramah, the situation was serious, leading to a multi-million dollar shortfall and a retrenchment of expenses across the board.

Jennifer Kattler Trilling is passionate about Camp Ramah. The former camper and counselor, who went on to send her own three kids to camp, calls Ramah “transformative in every way.”

“Camp forged my Jewish identity, and some of the best experiences of my childhood were there. For me, camp is pure joy,” she says. “My kids’ relationship with Ramah was equally powerful and positive, which makes me feel really blessed.”

In recognition of this blessing, Jennifer and her husband Lawrence established the Jennifer Kattler Trilling and Lawrence Trilling Family Scholarship Fund, an endowment directed toward making camp accessible to families for whom it may otherwise be out of reach.

“We set up the fund to make sure anyone who would like to attend camp can do so, regardless of their means. We love Ramah so dearly and want to pay forward what it’s given us and our family.”

– JENNIFER KATTLER TRILLING

Endowments

Endowments have been established to provide support for scholarships and for the development of new programs without the necessity of increasing camp fees. Camp Ramah in California thanks all who have donated to our Ramah Scholarship Endowment Fund and to our Program Endowments. We are grateful to the following families who have established these endowments:

SCHOLARSHIP ENDOWMENTS

Anonymous Scholarship Endowment Fund
Appel Scholarship Endowment Fund
Sam & Rosalie Barnett Scholarship Fund
The Rhoda & Bob Barnhard, Betty & Sheldon
Feinberg Endowment in memory of
Harry Barnhard
Becker Scholarship Endowment Fund
Nancy Beren & Larry Jefferson,
Amy & Robert Bressman, Julie & Marc Platt,
Ellen & Adam Beren Scholarship Endowment
Robert M. Beren Scholarship Fund
Bockman Scholarship Endowment Fund
Deutsch Family Scholarship Endowment
Freda & William Fingerhut Scholarship
Endowment Fund
The Abner & Roz Goldstine Scholarship Fund
Goodglick Family Scholarship Endowment Fund
Grandparents Four Scholarship Endowment Fund
Dr. Norman & Lela Jacoby Scholarship Endowment
Ralph & Taren Jacoby Metson, Joel & Susan
Jacoby Stern, Jonathan & Judy Jacoby Chiel
Scholarship Endowment Fund in honor of our
parents Dr. Norman & Lela Jacoby

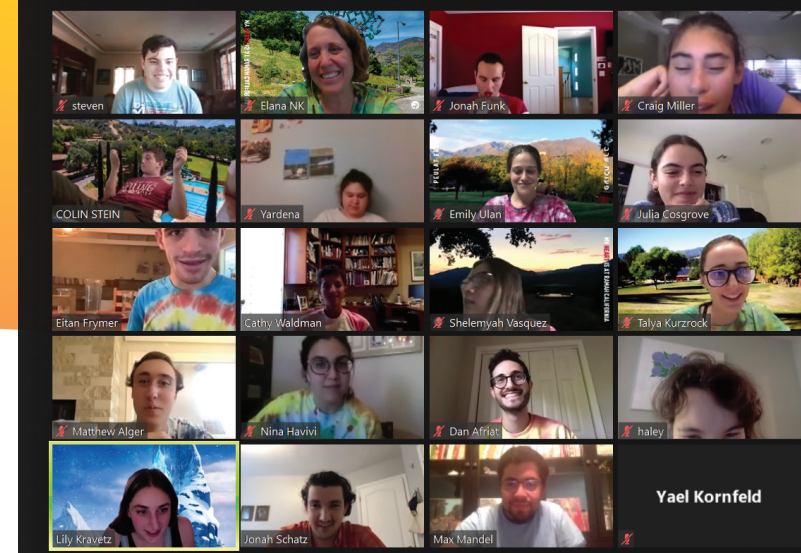
Sybil & Mannon Kaplan Scholarship Fund
Debra & Robert Kasirer Scholarship Fund
Bessie Krevitz Scholarship Endowment Fund
Irene & Howard Levine Scholarship Fund
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Dr. David Leiber Scholarship Endowment Fund
Lowy Scholarship Endowment Fund
Petty & Bates Metson Scholarship
Endowment Fund
The Schneider Family Scholarship Endowment
Lana Berke Silverman Tikvah Scholarship Fund
The Smotrich Family Scholarship Fund
Jennifer Kattler Trilling and Lawrence Trilling
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Ziegler Scholarship Endowment Fund
Zimmer Scholarship Fund

PROGRAM ENDOWMENTS

The Barnhard Mador Young Leadership
Endowment
Mercaz Yisrael: Endowment for Israel Programs
Nechama Fund for Staff Wellness
The Spitzer Family IKAR Endowment
The Spiwak Family Tikkun Olam Endowment
Tikvah Program Endowment
The Ziegler Tikvah Counselors' Endowment

OTHER ENDOWMENTS


Bernice and Richard Bogash Endowment
June and Irving Brott Family Endowment
Nuritt & Elie Mechaly Facilities Beautification
and Maintenance Endowment Fund
Hayom U'leTamid Endowment



2020 Donor Roll

The following donors* have supported Camp Ramah through contributions to annual campaign, scholarship, Tikvah, summer programming, special projects, capital improvements, capital campaign, gala and Fire Fund. Donors to campaigns or giving societies are also listed on the preceding pages. We are very grateful to all the members of our Ramah community who are committed to supporting our beloved camp!

Ruth Abers	Angel Alvarez-Mapp	Tal & Mory Barak	Sarah Benor
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Merrill & Gregg Alpert	Taraneh Banapour & Babak Banafsheha	Judith Bender	Lynn & Les Bider 
Halina & Dr. Alan Alter	Amanda & Matthew Bandy	Donna & Ron Bender	Drs. Aviva & Leon Biederman 
Abra & Brandon Altman		Limor Bendor	

 Legacy donors |  Shomrei Ramah donor |  Chai Society donors | Note that bold means 5 years of consecutive giving history










Camp Ramah's **Shomrei Ramah Society** (Guardians of Ramah) includes donors who choose to make an annual contribution of \$5,000 or more, to support Camp Ramah's scholarship, programming, and unrestricted support for the camp's greatest needs.



Camp Ramah's **Chai Society** includes donors who choose to make an annual contribution of 1,800 or more, to support Camp Ramah's scholarship, programming, and unrestricted support for the camp's greatest needs.









The **Alon Binyamin Legacy Circle** includes members who are securing the future of Camp Ramah in California through their estate plans. We are deeply grateful to the families who have committed to ensure that Ramah will be available for generations of campers to come.

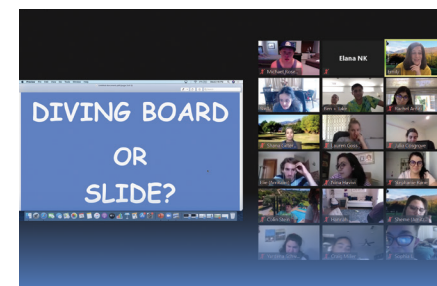
*If your name has been listed incorrectly, or was accidentally omitted please email kim@ramah.org so that we can update our records. We sincerely apologize for any errors.

2020 Donor Roll

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