

INTENTIONAL JEWISH DAY CAMPS: AN EMERGING PHENOMENON

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2018



Jewish Summers. Jewish Future.

INTRODUCTION

“Everyone goes to day camp,” according to Anna Bennett (Planning Executive in the Jewish Life Department of UJA-Federation of New York and the central executive at UJA-Federation who deals with camps), while “not everyone” goes to overnight camp. Indeed, given their relative affordability and low barrier to entry, day camps have the capacity to engage far more Jewish children and their families than overnight camps.

If Jewish day camps can provide substantial benefit similar to that provided by Jewish overnight camps in building Jewish identity and commitment in their campers, staff, and families, then the sheer numbers of their current and potential constituents demand the Jewish community’s attention.

When Foundation for Jewish Camp (FJC) was established in 1998, it made the decision to deal exclusively with overnight camps. At the time, what little research existed about the Judaic benefits of camp related only to overnight camps. Additionally, few if any day camps – in contrast to a considerable number of Jewish overnight camps – made even token efforts to be intentional about transmitting Jewish culture, values and content. Excluding consideration of day camps was a policy which made sense for FJC at the time. In the interest of full disclosure, the author of this paper served as Executive Director of FJC at that time and was a principal author of that policy.

Times have changed. In the last eight years or so, the Jewish community has witnessed the emergence of a number of day camps which – each in its own different and distinctive way – are approaching Jewish life at camp with a high degree of seriousness and intentionality. This trend appears to be accelerating, so much so that in 2014 FJC reversed its policy and announced the inclusion of day camps in its mission and evolving vision, choosing to view day camps as an entry portal by which to engage families with young children in Jewish life and Jewish choices. FJC’s initial efforts to deepen Jewish impact and leverage the potential of day camps included the Kayitz Kef initiative¹, providing intensive, immersive Hebrew language programming for children at selected Jewish day camps; the Jewish Coaching Project², providing a selected group of JCC day camps in the greater New York area with intensive coaching aimed at raising the level of intentionality of their Jewish programs; and the Day Camp Incubator³, which helped several Jewish agencies in the greater New York area to prepare and launch new, Jewishly intentional day camps.

UJA-Federation of New York has been a major catalyst in the development of Jewishly intentional day camping. In addition to funding FJC’s Jewish Coaching Project and Day Camp Incubator, UJA-Federation has made the enhancement of New York Jewish day camping one of its top strategic priorities. Accordingly, it made a \$35 million commitment to renovate and upgrade the physical plant of the Henry Kaufmann Campgrounds, on whose three campuses many of New York’s JCC day camps operate their programs every summer. FJC is working closely with UJA-Federation to provide insights regarding capital improvements and programmatic innovations, and to assist in fundraising.

FJC engaged me as an independent consultant to write this study of Jewishly intentional day camps. In the course of the research for this paper, I have come to appreciate the potential that such camps seem to have to positively affect the Jewish journeys of tens of thousands of youngsters and their families. Simply put, though I was once deeply skeptical about the Jewish value of day camps, I have become a convert.

¹ See <https://jewishcamp.org/camp-professionals/immersive-learning/kayitz-kef/>. Kayitz Kef/Hebrew at Camp is a project of the Areivim Philanthropic Group in partnership with FJC.

² See <https://jewishcamp.org/camp-professionals/immersive-learning/jewish-coaching-project/>. The Jewish Coaching Project is a program of FJC, funded by UJA-Federation of New York.

³ See <https://jewishcamp.org/camp-professionals/field-growth/day-camp-incubator/>. The Day Camp Incubator was operated by FJC with funding from UJA-Federation of New York.

THIS PAPER WILL:

- Explore a sampling of Jewishly intentional day camps;
- Highlight several examples of these new or newly redefined day camps, with special focus on Moshava Ba'ir NJ (an offshoot of Camp Moshava Indian Orchard, affiliated with the Bnei Akiva movement); New Country Day Camp (a program of The 14th Street Y in New York); and Sprout Brooklyn (an offshoot of Camp Young Judaea Sprout Lake, affiliated with the Young Judaea movement);
- Discuss in less detail, several other examples of newly Jewishly intentional day camps. These will include Sprout Westchester, Ramah Day Camp of Greater Washington (DC), Moshava Ba'ir Toronto, JCC Day Camps Powered by Tamarack (Detroit MI), In The City Camp (Atlanta GA), and BB Day Camp Portland (OR);
- Explore commonalities among the camps profiled, and identify lessons to be learned; and
- Make recommendations for next steps for work in the arena of Jewishly intentional day camps.

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METHODOLOGY

Together with Jenni ZefTel, Director of Day Camp and Strategic Programs for FJC, I compiled a list of new (or in at least one case, renewed) day camps that—each in its own distinctive way—exhibit a significant degree of Jewish intentionality in designing their programs. From late April through early June, as the 2018 camp season was approaching, I conducted telephone interviews with the directors of each of these camps, and with some additional key informants with whom a conversation seemed likely to be productive. Subsequently, we selected three of the camps for more in-depth presentations in this report; we made site visits to each of these camps during the 2nd and 3rd weeks of July 2018. In the interest of transparency, I note that Jenni ZefTel formerly served as director of New Country Day Camp, one of the highlighted camps.

In addition to the key informant interviews and site visits mentioned above (and listed in the Appendices below), the work of this study was informed by an intense set of informal conversations, internet research, and a review of relevant past publications. We are grateful in particular for the decades of work and thought leadership in the field of Jewish day camps that have been conducted by JCC Association, the leading provider of Jewish day camps in North America. Chabad, and particularly Chabad's Gan Israel Day/Overnight camp in Philadelphia, directed by Zalman Gerber, has also provided an important example. I am particularly thankful to the many members of the professional staff and lay leadership of Foundation for Jewish Camp with whom I have been in relationship over the years, who have provided invaluable food for thought which helped to nurture this project. Finally, we are immensely grateful to Nan and Allan Lipton for their generosity in providing the funding that made this research possible.

In the course of this paper, I will present in relatively greater detail a description of the motivations and origins of three day camps together with profiles of their programs, focusing on the ways in which these camps are intentionally Jewish. I will present brief profiles of six additional Jewishly intentional day camps. It is important to note that the camps I interviewed are not the only Jewishly intentional day camps in the field. Rather, they are illustrative of a larger trend which seems to be accelerating all across North America.

Finally, I will identify some notable commonalities among the highlighted camps, noting lessons to be learned and characteristics which appear ripe for replication. I will conclude with recommendations on how to effectively pursue and expand work in the increasingly important arena of Jewishly intentional day camps.

EACH IN ITS OWN DISTINCTIVE WAY

There are many different varieties of Jewish day camps, just as there are of Jewish overnight camps. Jewish day camps that adopt Jewishly intentional educational practices –like their overnight camp counterparts –will do so in a way that makes sense for their particular outlook (whether religious, Zionist or something else), culture, and style.

Seid-Valencia and Greene⁴ make a useful distinction between a “centered-set” and a “bounded set” approach to Jewish organizational life. Without going into the details that they lay out, there are some institutions which see the Jewish community as a closed circle, and that see their job as strengthening the community’s core; and other institutions that envision the Jewish community as an open tent, and see their job as encouraging those who approach the tent to stop by, and to engage in a Jewish journey which may gradually bring them closer to the center. In the day camp world, as we shall see, this leads to dramatic diversity among camps, yielding such variation as between, for example, Moshava Ba’ir, which caters to a constituency which is already deeply affiliated and committed to the modern Orthodox Jewish community, and New Country Day Camp, whose constituents can be described as consisting largely of “less affiliated” Jews, many of whom may be in search of Jewish connections and identity.

This report includes camps which come from Orthodox, Conservative, Zionist, JCC and independent perspectives. Each of the profiled camps makes a serious attempt to be intentional about its Judaic approach. Each does so in its own distinctive way. FJC, from its founding, has been respectful of the wide divergence in approach in the overnight camp world. The same broad view applies in the day camp world as well and is reflected in this paper.

⁴ Rabbi Hugh Seid-Valencia and Rabbi James Greene, “A Centered-Set Approach to Jewish Community,” in eJewishPhilanthropy.com, July 12, 2018: https://ejewishphilanthropy.com/a-centered-set-approach-to-jewish-community/?utm_source=July+12%2C+2018&utm_campaign=Thurs+July+12&utm_medium=email.

PART I

NOTABLE CASES OF JEWISHLY INTENTIONAL DAY CAMPS: THREE EXAMPLES

The simplest way to tell the story of the emergence of new models of notable, Jewishly intentional day camps is to briefly profile a sampling of camps that exemplify them. For the purposes of this paper, we have chosen to explore the stories of three such NY-area camps: Moshava Ba'ir NJ, New Country Day Camp, and Sprout Brooklyn. They are presented in alphabetical order.

MOSHAVA BA'IR NJ

Moshava Ba'ir NJ is a program of Bnei Akiva of North America (BANA), and is closely aligned with Camp Moshava Indian Orchard, in Honesdale PA. Bnei Akiva is a worldwide, modern Orthodox, Zionist youth movement. In North America, it operates through 37 local chapters with weekly activities for children organized by age group, starting with 2nd graders, and continuing through high school graduation. BANA operates a network of four overnight camps in the US and one in Canada, mainly under the “Moshava” Bnei Akiva brand.

In 2010, BANA opened its first day camp, called Moshava Ba'ir NJ (the name is Hebrew which means “Moshava in the city”). The central motivating idea for creation of the day camp was to engage more children at a younger age than was possible through the overnight camp. Campers at Moshava Ba'ir NJ start as entering kindergarteners. Organizers believed that creating a day camp might serve as a pipeline to the overnight camp, bringing in more campers; they also hoped that it would help to strengthen participation in the BANA chapters in the greater NY area.

Since its inception, Moshava Ba'ir NJ has operated in rented premises at the Frisch School, a modern Orthodox high school in Paramus, NJ. The location is a major benefit, as it is a large facility, though director Shlomo Stern (who took over leadership of Moshava Ba'ir NJ in 2015) notes that it does have some significant limitations. It sits in the center of New Jersey's Bergen County, a major center of modern Orthodox Jewish life, which includes such communities as Bergenfield, Englewood, Teaneck and Tenafly. Campers are drawn overwhelmingly from these modern Orthodox communities, and extending outward as far as Manhattan, Riverdale (in the Bronx), and New Rochelle and White Plains (in the Westchester, NY suburbs). Most camper families are deeply engaged members of the modern Orthodox community. Perhaps 5% of the campers are not from modern Orthodox families, according to Stern, and these come mainly from committed Conservative Jewish families whose children attend Solomon Schechter Day Schools, or Israeli expatriate families. Stern noted that only about 5% of the campers do not attend Jewish day schools, either because they cannot afford the high tuitions, or because they have special needs which those schools cannot meet.

ENGAGING YOUNG CAMPERS

In keeping with its location and demographic, Moshava Ba'ir NJ has a rich Jewish life. In addition to a general atmosphere of *ruach* (spirit)—generated by a great deal of singing and dancing of Jewish and Israeli songs and dances—camp has a comprehensive program of *chinuch* (Jewish education). There is a summer-long educational theme (Prophets, for example). Each week has a sub-theme (earliest Prophets, for example).

All campers have a daily 35-minute *chinuch* activity period. On Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays, these focus on age-appropriate activities to explore aspects (David and Goliath, for example) of the weekly theme. On Thursdays, the *chinuch* period is given over to a division-wide educational activity. On Fridays, all campers learn about that week's Torah portion.

Chinuch is planned and run by one or two dedicated professionals (generally, long-time day school Judaica teachers), who are supported by a staff of 8-10 educators (typically younger Jewish day school teachers). Additionally, there is a daily activity dedicated to Israel experience. Finally, there are Judaic

connections to most other activity areas, including, for example, *m'lechet yad* (arts and crafts), *bishul* (cooking), and *nagarut* (carpentry), though in these areas, camp's practice is "don't force it if it doesn't work."

Here are some examples of how the activity areas may be connected to Judaics, taken from activities witnessed on the site visit:

- A group of boys in a music workshop learning the song *Eliyahu HaNavi* (Elijah the Prophet), in keeping with the summer *chinuch* theme of Prophets. Because my visit came during the "nine days" leading up to Tisha B'av (the commemoration of the destruction of the ancient Jewish Temple), the music specialist was teaching without using musical instruments. Incidentally, this practice was echoed around camp, where any recorded music was performed by a *cappella* groups, so that musical instruments were not in use.
- 10-year-old girls in a *m'lechet yad* (arts and crafts) workshop constructing miniature almond trees. This was intended to connect with a recent weekly *haftarah* reading (a reading in synagogue from the Biblical prophets) dealing with the prophet Jeremiah's vision related to the destruction of the Temple. In case the connection was not clear, the finished projects were sent home with a sticker inscribed as follows: "*The Prophet Yirmiyahu's (Jeremiah's) Vision of the Flowering Almond Rod*—The Bible uses the Shaked (Almond) to show swiftness. In Yirmiyahu 1:11-12, G-d asks Yirmiyahu what he sees. He answers, 'I see the branch of a Shaked.' G-d says to him 'You have seen right, for I am 'shoked' (swift) to bring My Word to pass."
- In *nagarut* (carpentry), a project consisting of a small model building, constructed with a collapsible roof. It was intended to relate to the destruction of the ancient Temple to be commemorated in a few days on Tisha B'Av. The accompanying take-home sticker reads: "This project represents the destruction of the בית המקדש and the rise of synagogues centered on prayer instead of sacrifice."⁵

SHAPING STAFF

Moshava Ba'ir NJ is concerned not only with education for its campers, but also for its staff. There is a daily minyan for staff in the morning, prior to the campers' arrival. Additionally, staff contracts stipulate that staff must be present in camp on a specified evening once each week, and on that evening, camp sponsors an educational program for the staff.

WHOLE FAMILY IMPACT

Moshava Ba'ir NJ says that they don't make much of a special effort to stay connected with its families throughout the year, but rather, that they rely on the area Bnei Akiva chapters to do so. Nevertheless, they do have a robust parent outreach program during the summer, including these elements: (a) many parents are physically present in camp frequently, some almost daily; (b) camp sends home the campers' schedule each day, with the intent that it be used to facilitate camper-parent conversations at home each evening, giving whole families the opportunity to engage in joyful Judaism in their regular environment; (c) on the last night of the camp season, parents are invited to join their children at camp for supper and a family carnival. Counting children and parents, nearly 2,000 people attend; (d) additionally, throughout the year, Moshava Ba'ir NJ offers an occasional Shabbaton in key communities, focusing heavily on camp songs and dances geared for parents; it also views these as recruitment opportunities.

Having started in 2010 with an enrollment of approaching 200 campers, Moshava Ba'ir NJ has grown to a summer enrollment of approximately 800 unique campers in 2018. An average of 605 campers per week attended this summer, with 675 during the week of my visit. Most campers stay for the full 8-week summer, though some stay for six or four weeks. Although it is allowed, few attend for less than four weeks. According to Stern, in the summer of 2018, Moshava Ba'ir NJ served some 300 campers entering kindergarten and 1st grade, who are too young to have been eligible to attend an overnight camp. 350 staff worked at Moshava Ba'ir NJ in 2018 over the course of the summer, with 220-230 serving at any one time.

⁵ The Hebrew, which means "Temple," was presented as shown, in Hebrew without vowels, and accompanied by neither transliteration nor translation.

NEW COUNTRY DAY CAMP

New Country Day Camp (NCDC) has been in existence for at least 40 years, according to director Lili Weiss-Voskidis; current leadership is not aware of any records documenting the camp's early history, so the motivation for its establishment and the story of its early history are not currently known. At some point in their journey, NCDC became part of Educational Alliance. Since about 2000, NCDC has been a program of the 14th Street Y (itself a part of Educational Alliance); camp is conducted at the Staten Island campus of the Henry Kaufmann Campgrounds.

Camp today is dramatically different from how it was twenty years ago. Then, the camp's educational leadership was provided by an Orthodox educator and his family; Jewish life at camp centered around Orthodox Judaism, and Judaism was "literal" (as Weiss-Voskidis described it). For example, the drama program featured a play each week about that week's Torah portion. Much of the staff was Orthodox. The campers were a mix of children from middle and lower socio-economic classes. In a typical week, there were about 100 campers and 40 staff.

Somewhere between then and now, the long-serving Orthodox Jewish educator departed, and New Country Day Camp underwent a Jewish identity crisis. Camp became part of the 14th Street Y, which cycled through several executive directors. NCDC itself cycled through a number of camp directors. In the absence of the Orthodox staff which had previously driven camp's Jewish vision, Jewish practices fell away, and the camp's Jewish identity became fuzzy. By 2013, it was hard to answer the question: "What's Jewish about New Country Day Camp?"

Starting around 2014, NCDC undertook a Jewish renaissance. This new attention to camp's Jewish program is attributed by camp leadership to two factors:

1. **INSPIRED LEADERSHIP**—The arrival of Shira Koch Epstein, early in 2014, as Executive Director of the 14th Street Y. Epstein, who is a rabbi, is very supportive and encouraging of making camp's Jewish mission more explicit.
2. **JEWISH COACHING & PHILANTHROPIC INVESTMENT**—NCDC's participation in the Jewish Coaching Project, a program of Foundation for Jewish Camp, funded by UJA-Federation of New York. The Jewish Coaching Project provided NCDC with two assets that camp found invaluable in implementing this reinvention: a coach (Rabbi Michael Mellen) who was able to work with them to think creatively about camp-relevant Jewish models; and a community of other camps engaging in similar work with whom to share the struggles and triumphs of undergoing the transformation towards a more Jewishly intentional and explicit Jewish program.

Today, in sharp contrast to 20 years ago, there are some 550 campers in the program at any given time (a total of 800 unique campers during summer 2018), and about 130 staff at a time (a total of 175 for the summer). Campers on average come from families that are considerably more affluent. About 70% of the campers and about 35% of the staff are Jewish. The camp's Jewish program is characterized by the metaphor of the "open tent," or what NCDC staff refer to as Open Tent Judaism. As the camp's website⁶ puts it:

A non-religious program, NCDC kids jump into new ideas and universal concepts through cultural Jewish story-telling. We welcome campers of all backgrounds; your kids don't have to be Jewish to enjoy the 14th Street Y's New Country Day Camp. Inclusion of all types of families and children, including those with developmental differences and special needs, is a priority at NCDC.

The phrase about "cultural Jewish story-telling" is to be taken seriously. Every summer camp has a Jewish educational theme: for 2018 it is *Rodef shalom*, "Pursuer of peace." Activities of all kinds (arts, sports, gardening, and much more) are connected to this theme. A Jewish educator has prepared a

⁶ <https://www.14streety.org/camps/newcountrydaycamp/>.

curriculum which ties the theme to a series of Jewish texts. The texts, together with discussion guides and activities, are provided to the counselor staff. Once each day for campers in each age group, a significant camp activity begins with a brief (~10-minute) study of a simple Jewish text, often in Chevruta⁷ pairs.

For example, I had the opportunity to watch Julieta and Sarah (the activity area leaders for visual arts and movement, respectively), lead this introductory activity at the beginning of a session on mask-making for a group of 9-year-olds. It went as follows:

- Campers were asked to name times when people use masks. They generated a list.
- Campers were asked to remind the counselor what “*Rodef shalom*” means. They did so quickly and successfully.
- Three campers were asked to read (one camper for each line) the famous dictum by Hillel⁸:
If I am not for myself, who will be for me?
But if I am only for myself, what am I?
And if not now, when?

After each line was read, the staff led a discussion to make sure its meaning was clear to the campers. They briefly explored the apparent tension between the first and second lines. They asked campers to imagine how these might apply in a situation of interpersonal conflict. They were asked how this related to the idea of being a *Rodef shalom*. And finally, they noted how these issues could be addressed much more effectively if people’s true feelings were exposed, rather than masked... connecting the discussion seamlessly to the mask-making activity.

This text-based discussion proceeded quickly and was completed in under 15 minutes. It was impressive to witness, especially in that a major part of the leadership came from a non-Jewish staff member. I had the opportunity to witness variations of this discussion throughout the day related to a wide variety of camp activities (sports, gardening, “Imagineering”, etc.). A benefit of this type of leadership from a handful of non-Jewish staff may be that it models how “less affiliated” Jewish campers and their families might explore Judaism in environments that mimic their lives, where Jewish awareness exists, but Jewish identity is not necessarily central.

Later in the day, I had the opportunity to reflect on this portion of the camp’s Jewish program with two staff members: Sarah, an activity director for movement (who participated in leading the activity reported above) is Jewish, describing herself as “non-practicing”; Tess, an assistant activity director for sports, is not Jewish. Both say that they welcome leading the text portion of activities once each day. They say that they understand that since this is a Jewish camp, it is appropriate for the program to include overt Jewish material. NCDC leadership has worked hard over their years in the Jewish Coaching Project to convey this message to staff, which in 2018 seems to have taken hold. Both Sarah and Tess appreciate the opportunity to learn, which teaching the activity affords them. They say that parents appreciate that the overt Jewish teaching enables the camp to be more explicit about its aims. (And, I hear from other sources, that despite fears when the initiative to become more explicitly Jewish in content was introduced that parents would think of it as “too Jewish,” camp enrollment jumped 25% since these changes were made.) Sarah and Tess enjoy preparing their short Jewish lessons and note that they would benefit if NCDC’s Jewish specialist would come more frequently to observe and provide more feedback and supervision.

Other elements of NCDC’s Jewish program include a lot of singing of Hebrew songs, and a robust celebration of Shabbat on Fridays.

⁷ Chevruta is “a traditional rabbinic approach to Talmudic study in which a small group of students (usually 2-5) analyze, discuss, and debate a shared text” according to <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chavrusa>.

⁸ Pirke Avot 1:14.

SPROUT BROOKLYN

Established in 2015 as part of FJC's Day Camp Incubator funded by UJA-Federation, the Young Judaea Sprout Brooklyn Day Camp (Sprout Brooklyn) is sponsored and managed by Camp Young Judaea Sprout Lake (CYJSL, or Sprout Lake).

Sprout Lake is an overnight camp located near Poughkeepsie in the lower Hudson Valley of New York State, which is connected to Young Judaea (YJ), the international Zionist youth movement. Sprout Lake serves youngsters from age 7 into the teen years. The camp, like the YJ movement, is deeply connected to Israel, and is politically non-partisan and non-denominationally Jewish.

For much of its earlier history, Sprout Lake relied on Young Judaea clubs⁹ in the New York-New Jersey area and the greater Northeast as the basis of its camper recruitment. In recent years, however, enrollment in YJ's club system has been greatly diminished. Starting around 2008, Helene Drobenare, Sprout Lake's longtime¹⁰ director, started to think that creating a day camp would be an effective way to generate a more reliable pipeline for camper recruitment. She brought the idea to her board, which liked it, but was hesitant for several years to take any concrete action in that direction, in the absence of available funding to invest in a new start-up venture.

That changed in 2013, when UJA-Federation of New York offered funding for research and development for a cohort of 6-7 camps to explore what it would take to open new, Jewishly intentional day camps. A series of focus groups convinced Sprout Lake leadership that the camp's Zionist approach resonated with the Brooklyn constituency, and that a camp with a Hebrew language focus (which ultimately became a dual language approach) was exciting both to the parent camp and to potential constituents.

Sprout Brooklyn opened in the summer of 2015 in a rented New York City charter school with a modest registration averaging fewer than 50 campers per week and a total of about 100 unique campers for the summer. In its fourth summer (2018), Sprout Brooklyn attracted 165-200 campers per week, and served 285 unique campers in the course of the summer of 2018. The camp continues to rely on outside grants to cover a portion of its operating costs, but estimates that it will be self-sufficient by 2020.

EXPANDING A SUCCESSFUL BRAND

The camp's programmatic goal was to bring everything offered at Sprout Lake to Sprout Brooklyn, and adapt it to Sprout Brooklyn's younger children and shorter camp day. Today, the camp program begins and ends every day with an opening and closing ceremony conducted mainly in Hebrew, including cheers, singing and more. There are activity rotations that include mindfulness/yoga, *omanut* (art), STEM/robotics, *bishul* (cooking), sports, and much more. Weather permitting, all campers swim (by age group) at least 3-4 times a week. Each group has a daily period of *Ivrit b'yachad* ("Hebrew together") in which a fun, interactive, immersive Hebrew lesson is offered with no English spoken. The camp has eight Israeli *shlichim*, and each group has at least one counselor who is a native Hebrew speaker (either a *shaliach* or an Israeli-American living in Brooklyn) who interacts with the campers exclusively in Hebrew all day long (except in the case of an emergency).

Camp has a "Jewish value of the week" (the week we visited it was *Tza'ar ba'alei Chayim*, the ethical treatment of animals). During our visit, we witnessed an *omanut* (art) session working with camper paintings of animals; a *sayarut* (travels around Israel) activity exploring the Safari Park (Zoo) in Ramat Gan; and an *Ivrit b'yachad* (Hebrew together) immersive in which children learned the names of animals (from dog and cat to rhinoceros to lion) in Hebrew, all clearly connected to the weekly theme.

⁹ Young Judaea clubs are historically meant to conduct regular, periodic programs and activities based on Young Judaea's Zionists ideals at age-appropriate levels for youngsters from age 7 through teenagers in locales throughout the area.

¹⁰ She has been director of CYJSL since 1999.

Care is taken to build strong connections between Sprout Brooklyn and the parent camp at Sprout Lake. Once a week, a group of the oldest Sprout Lake teens come on a field trip to Sprout Brooklyn to lead activities, particularly for the youngest campers. The Sprout Lake campers are chosen by lottery, since more volunteer than can be accommodated. They need to wake up by 6 am in order to make the trip and wear t-shirts that illustrate how Sprout Brooklyn and Sprout Lake are co-branded expressions of the same larger entity.

Conversely, the oldest Sprout Brooklyn campers are offered the opportunity—which many accept—to have an overnight once each session at the “big camp.” This helps to build the connection between the camps, and to encourage Sprout Brooklyn campers to think of Sprout Lake as they get older. It is too early to tell to what extent Sprout Brooklyn will be an effective pipeline to Sprout Lake, but to date about a dozen campers have made the transition – slightly more than expected and hoped for.

The connection between the camps is further cemented at the staff level. The staff from Sprout Brooklyn, together with the staff from Sprout Westchester (see below) spend the Shabbat of staff orientation week at Sprout Lake, and trainings during that time are conducted jointly.

REACHING FAMILIES

When Sprout Brooklyn was new, parents started arriving spontaneously (without being invited) to the weekly Friday Shabbat celebration at camp. Camp permitted and encouraged the practice, and today, the weekly event is attended by almost 200 campers and almost 400 adults every Friday afternoon.

Camp families have expressed interest in even more engagement than is currently available to them, both in the summer and year-round. While Sprout Brooklyn sees itself as a vehicle for engagement not only for its campers, but also for their families who, as noted above, are otherwise largely unaffiliated, it is still figuring out how best to deliver on that promise.

At least twice a year, camp sponsors a Sprout Brooklyn day for children and parents. For 2 hours on a Sunday afternoon, they offer camp-style activities, Israeli dance and *omanut* (art) activities. These Sunday afternoon “Family Fun Days” have thus far always taken place back at the charter school from which camp rents space during the summer. The camp feels these events are partially successful, but are open to additional improvements as they discover what will best resonate with parents. Sprout Brooklyn is also experimenting with “Camp in the Winter” for a few days each year when schools are closed.

In all these activities, Sprout Brooklyn is careful to offer programming when it is NOT being offered by area synagogues, so as not to be seen as competition.

PART II

OTHER EMERGING JEWISHLY INTENTIONAL DAY CAMPS

In this section, we offer brief profiles of six additional new-ish day camps that are notable for offering a Jewishly intentional program, each in its own unique way.

The inclusion of these camps in this section is meant to illustrate that the three camps profiled in more depth in Part I are by no means the ONLY new Jewishly intentional day camps on the scene. Nor does it imply that these camps are less “notable” than the camps profiled in Part I, or that they are the only other newly emerging intentional Jewish day camps on the scene. Rather, it means simply that we have researched these camps for the purposes of this study, and we have done so in less depth than the three camps in Part I so our profiles are shorter and less complete. Additionally, I have not personally visited these camps, whereas I made in-person site visits to each of the camps profiled in Part I.

Here, the camps are presented in reverse alphabetical order.

SPROUT WESTCHESTER

Like Sprout Brooklyn (see above), Sprout Westchester is a project of Camp Young Judaea Sprout Lake. CYJSL had just concluded a set of focus groups which had established that Brooklyn was a more promising venue for a new day camp with Sprout Lake’s vision and values when UJA-Federation of New York approached the CYJSL, and asked them to take over the management of an existing day camp, Camp Discovery. The camp was previously a program of the Rosenthal JCC, which was slated to close after the summer of 2015. CYJSL agreed to undertake the management of the camp with an initial pilot in summer 2016, with the provision that it change the camp’s mission and program to match that of Sprout Brooklyn.

The Jewish population of Northern Westchester, where the camp is located, is much less dense than that of Brownstone Brooklyn, and there was an existing camp with a different mission, and a camper body that was 80% non-Jewish, operating on the site. For these reasons, it has been a slow proposition to transition the camp to its new mission, and to recruit a critical mass of campers. Nevertheless, the camp completed its third summer in 2018, with a growing camper body, now numbering 40-50 campers per week, or over 100 unique campers for the summer. Movement towards the camp’s Zionist vision, as expressed at Sprout Brooklyn (and as described in detail above) is slow but steady.

RAMAH DAY CAMP OF GREATER WASHINGTON

Ramah Day Camp of Greater Washington is the newest and fourth day camp in the Ramah system, building off of years of success in the overnight and day camping arena. Because Washington DC is part of its catchment area, Camp Ramah in New England serves as the sponsor of Ramah Day Camp of Greater Washington. The camp’s creation was instigated by a group of Conservative rabbis in Montgomery County, MD, who wanted to create a non-Orthodox religious Jewish day camp option in the area, and also to strengthen Ramah in their community. Camp is located in Germantown MD on a rental facility, and serves campers from as far away as Alexandria VA (an hour away by bus).

A typical morning at camp begins with *tefillah* (prayer) and continues with *Yehadut* (Jewish study) following a text-based experiential curriculum created by a staff of three teachers from Solomon Schechter day schools and covering such topics as *makom kadosh* (holy place), *oseh ma’aseh b’reishit* (the creation of the world), and *chaveirut* (friendship). The typical morning continues with swim and then a camp activity rotation.

In the afternoon, campers might have sports, arts, and a period of outdoor education. The program is clearly inspired by what is offered at the Ramah overnight camps.

Camp started with a one-week trial session at the end of the summer of 2014, and opened for the entire summer in 2015. Camp runs for six weeks, with a minimum enrollment of two weeks per camper. The first summer there were 102 unique campers, or about 67 “full summer equivalents” (FSEs). Camp grew to 126 FSEs and 204 unique campers in 2017, and for summer 2018, enrollment reached 162 FSEs and 247 unique campers.

MOSHAVA BA’IR TORONTO

Moshava Ba’ir Toronto is similar to Moshava Ba’ir NJ (see above), upon which it was consciously modeled, opening one year later, in 2011. At the time of its founding, organizers felt that there was no good Jewish day camp option in greater Toronto for modern Orthodox children. It was established with two main goals in mind:

- To encourage more children to become more involved in the *snifim* (branches, or chapters) of Bnei Akiva, and
- To become a feeder to Camp Moshava in Ennismore ONT, the B’nei Akiva overnight camp in the area.

A key goal was to create a camp that exemplified high quality in all respects. Following the Moshava Ba’ir NJ model, this included such amenities as having an onsite camp nurse, which is unusual among Canadian day camps. This established a reputation that this is a camp that goes above and beyond. For another example, camp director Dikla Weitzner asserts that Moshava Ba’ir Toronto is the only Jewish day camp in the Toronto area that offers swim lessons.

Programmatically, Moshava Ba’ir Toronto is modeled after Moshava Ba’ir NJ, which in turn is modeled after a Moshava overnight camp. The day starts with *Mifkad* (an opening ceremony). This is followed by *davening* (prayer) by bunk group. Afterwards, there are eight activity periods per day (lunch plus seven others) for programs that include: Music; Dance; Drama; Science; *Chavaya Yisraeli* (Israeli experience); and *Chinuch* (education, following a succession of themes, which might include, in successive years, such topics as Israel, *Tanakh* (Bible), *Nevi'im* (Prophets), etc. The goal of the *Chinuch* program, according to camp director Dikla Weitzner, is “to give the kids more than they are getting in school,” which is a lofty goal given that more than 90% of the campers attend Toronto area Orthodox Jewish day schools. Two periods per day are reserved for swimming.

Camp takes place in a facility rented from a suburban Jewish day school. Both the pool and outdoor activities are off-site in nearby rented locations.

In its first year, Moshava Ba’ir Toronto served 180 unique campers. By 2017 this had grown to 384, and approximately 400 in 2018. While an original goal was for Moshava Ba’ir Toronto to serve as a feeder to Camp Moshava Ennismore, the overnight camp is now at full capacity, and cannot absorb all of those interested campers each summer. Accordingly, some Moshava Ba’ir Toronto campers “graduate” to Camp Stone (a B’nei Akiva camp in Western Pennsylvania) and some choose The Zone (an Orthodox camp in New York’s Catskills).

JCC DAY CAMPS POWERED BY TAMARACK

The JCC of Metro Detroit has recently partnered with Tamarack Camps (the 110-year-old preeminent Jewish overnight camp organization in the area) to take over much of the management and operation of the JCC Day Camps. The result is a co-branded venture beginning in 2018, called “JCC Day Camps Powered by Tamarack.” Although much of the benefit of the partnership will occur in the camps’ behind-the-scenes operations, there are several anticipated programmatic enhancements, all designed to upgrade the Jewish elements of the JCC Day Camps’ program.

The anticipated programmatic changes come under the heading of bringing the day camps some of Tamarack's "culture". "Culture," according to Randy Comensky, director of the newly co-branded camps, has to do with the emotional side of camp, including its rituals. Specifically, some Hebrew terminology which is used at Tamarack will be introduced in the day camps. Tamarack's summer rabbi, who oversees Bar and Bat Mitzvah tutoring and *ruach* (spirit), will be asked to have input at the day camps. The day camps will introduce *Havdallah*, the traditional ritual which closes Shabbat (and which is generally therefore conducted on Saturday evenings, but which, according to Jewish law, can be postponed as late as Tuesday), as an important element of their Monday morning program.

The day camps of the JCC of Metro Detroit registered just under 400 campers in 2017; during this first summer (2018) of the partnership between the JCC and Tamarack, they served over 450 campers.

IN THE CITY CAMP

Eileen Price, the founder and director of the Atlanta-based In The City Camp, created the program when she saw an unfilled need for her own kids. When they were of day camp age and she wanted them to be in a day camp with a serious Jewish program, she found nothing in what she called "the vast space between Chabad and the JCC". At In The City Camp, Price aims to "replicate what is amazing about overnight summer camp." Noting that "the Jewish family has changed," she brought the understanding that camp needs to be both highly affordable and highly accessible. Accordingly, camp is operated on "pop-up," rented sites, so that there is no overhead from property ownership. There is no parent institution, so there are no membership fees. Price raises about one third of the cost of operating the camp from foundations and donors, so that registration fees can be kept low, and generous need-based scholarships can be offered.

Educationally, the goal of camp is to offer experiential Jewish education, serious exposure to Zionism, Hebrew language, and Jewish culture and tradition. Three days a week (Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays), camp starts with a morning meeting including *shira* (singing), mainly in Hebrew. Then, camp divides into activities by age group, which include: 21st century skill learning; Hebrew and Israel; and Jewish culture. Each afternoon ends with a wrap-up including a quick question which serves as a prompt to reflect on the day.

Wednesdays, the campers go on a trip. On the bus, they discuss what's Jewish about the place they're visiting. Fridays, there is a 2-3 hour all-camp educational morning program that is similar to what one might find in an evening program at an overnight camp. Friday afternoons, there's an Oneg Shabbat. Each child brings home a portion of uncooked challah dough to be baked at home, as an overt attempt to extend the camp experience to their families and homes.

Camp currently operates on two sites during the summer (different sites in different parts of the summer). Families can register their child for any length of time they choose, from a single day to 11 weeks. The average child stays for 4 weeks.

The model seems to be working. For 2018, close to 600 campers participated over the course of the summer. Price hopes one day to extend the In The City Camp model to other parts of the country, hopefully with private funding and in partnership with FJC.

BB DAY CAMP PORTLAND

BB Camp, an overnight camp on the Oregon coast, has long had day camping on its radar screen. It opened an on-campus day camp for area children 12 years ago. That camp is geared for children from impoverished families in the Neotsu/Lincoln City OR area where the overnight camp is located, almost none of whom are Jewish.

BB Day Camp Portland, which opened for the first time in 2018, is something different. The goal is to offer a version of the program of BB Camp, animated by BB Camp's Jewish values, on a rented site in the city. The impetus for the camp's creation was an offer by Congregation Beth Israel, which has a facility with lots of appropriate indoor and outdoor space that was otherwise unused for the summer, to make its campus in Northwest Portland available.

In its first summer season in 2018, they served 121 unique campers who participated in over 200 camper-weeks. Of these, approximately 25% came from Reform congregations; 25% from Conservative congregations; 30% unaffiliated; and 20% "other," presumably from families of mixed religious heritage.

Camp has daily morning and closing circles where camp's values are expressed, and a roster of activities that include *Krav Maga* (an Israeli martial art); *Teva* (nature); cooking; water play; and more. There are lots of special activities, and out-of-camp trips.

BB Camp thinks of itself as a place where individuals and families can encounter Jewish ideas, principles, practices, and values. It calls itself a "boundless *kehillah* (community)." The goal is for BB Day Camp Portland to adopt all of these same characteristics.

COMMONALITIES AMONG THE CAMPS & LESSONS TO BE LEARNED

Examination of the camps profiled in this report revealed several areas of commonality among many of the camps, and the stories of their choosing to become Jewishly intentional convey a number of lessons that will be useful to learn.

THE BENEFITS OF DAY CAMP

Proponents of day camping cite the unique benefits and advantages of day camps¹¹ as compared to overnight camps. All the camps in our study cited these benefits as goals of their programs, to a greater or lesser degree. Day camps are said to:

- Provide the opportunity to reach children at a younger age than overnight camps, and therefore to reach more children and to keep them in the Jewish camping system for a longer duration. Most day camps begin with children who are four or five years old, compared with a starting age in overnight camps that is generally about age seven or eight. Dr. Judith Samuels, in the 2018 research just cited, asserts “numerous studies indicate that much of children’s cognitive development, including the development of individual religious or cultural identity takes place in the early childhood years.”
- Serve as a feeder or pipeline to registration in the associated overnight camp. While this is true for some campers, in practice most camps find that this holds true less frequently than anticipated. Some day campers prefer simply to stay in day camp. Sometimes, as in Moshava Ba’ir Toronto (see above), the associated overnight camp doesn’t have enough space to accommodate everyone who may be interested. Even without feeding campers into overnight camps, the Jewishly intentional day camps we studied appear to provide meaningful Judaic experiences (and therefore benefits) in their own right, even without transferring children to the overnight camp. We presume that these Judaic experiences generate lasting Judaic benefit as they do in overnight camps, and Samuel’s research (*Op cit.*) confirms that indeed, there is tremendous potential for long-lasting impact.
- Provide the opportunity to reach parents and siblings, not only campers, since (unlike campers at overnight camps) day campers go home every evening. In practice, while most of the camps we profiled have outreach to camper families on their “to do” lists, for the most part, they have not yet developed a substantial program in this area, though great potential remains. *This may be an area in which philanthropic investment and support could have great impact.*
- Be located in and around cities and in close proximity to the homes of young families, providing ample opportunity for year-round engagement.

Day camp provides a number of unique benefits that are inaccessible to overnight camps. The Jewish community needs to explore these and learn how to take better advantage of them.

BRAND EXTENSION

Most of the day camps we profiled are affiliated with existing overnight camps and represent extensions of their brands. The sponsoring overnight camp provides the day camp with considerable expertise in how to operate a camp. It offers the model of its culture and its approach and expects the day camp to follow that same approach. Moreover, it confers upon the new day camp the overnight camp’s reputation and provides it with instant credibility. Conversely, a successful day camp operation quickly enhances the reputation of the overnight camp with which it is affiliated. While not the only possible way to create a new

¹¹ The unique benefits perceived to accrue to Jewish day camps are the subject of a separate study, contemporaneous with this paper, which is being prepared for FJC by Judith Samuels, PhD.

Jewishly intentional day camp, nor the only methodology embraced by the camps in our study, **brand extension is a powerful and effective tool in creating many new Jewishly intentional day camps.**

FACILITY ADVANTAGES & CHALLENGES

Because they operate on a shorter day and shorter week than overnight camps, and because they don't need to provide sleeping space and elaborate facilities, day camps can operate with much greater flexibility in the size and shape of their facility, compared to overnight camps. The day camps in our study operate from a wide range of facility types, ranging from sizeable (25 acre or more) outdoor facilities with much of the look and feel of overnight camps, to rented space in school buildings, supplemented by nearby public parks and municipal pools. Whatever the configuration, it comes with both advantages and challenges. Almost every camp director we interviewed for our study took the opportunity to complain about the constraints his or her current facility imposed. Regardless of the nature of the facility, day camps, like overnight camps, need to operate from a facility that – at a minimum – has the following elements:

- Space, either indoors or outdoors, to conduct the variety of programs it offers.
- Locations which can serve as home bases (often called “bunks,” even if they don't look like traditional bunks at overnight camps) for campers by age group.
- Indoor (or at least, covered) space where programming can take place in the event of rain (unless camp is located in an area where rain is extremely infrequent during the camp season).
- Access to a pool, lake or other location where swimming is possible (though some camps in cooler climates may be able to forego this).
- Access to outdoor space which is suitable for sports.

While day camps can operate in a wide range of facilities, they have certain minimal needs, as described above. The Jewish community needs a repository of day camp expertise which would be equipped to provide prospective camp operators with relevant advice on these and many other issues.

AVAILABILITY OF FUNDING

Like virtually every business venture of any kind, establishing a day camp requires an up-front financial investment. Because most day camps don't necessarily require significant facilities (bunks, kitchens, etc.), the barrier to entry in this field is lower than it is for many overnight camps. Nevertheless, start-up costs are real, and in order to get established, a day camp needs a funding source which is prepared to make the requisite investment.

For most of the camps in our study, particularly those which are extensions of the brand of a parent camp or movement, the requisite financial investment was provided by the parent body. For several of the others, it was provided by philanthropic investments.

New day camps, like any new business ventures, need to be assured that they have a reliable source of the requisite start-up capital.

THE IMPACT OF PHILANTHROPY

The growth of the Jewish camp movement, spurred in particular by Foundation for Jewish Camp, has been catalyzed and enabled by the extraordinary investment of visionary philanthropists. It is worthwhile to digress for a moment from the narrative about day camps, to remind the reader about how it happened that the field of overnight camping became so prominent in the Jewish community.

Twenty years ago, when FJC was established in 1998, camp was essentially totally absent from the agenda and radar screen of the organized Jewish community. Camp was considered to be an “optional” recreational outlet for the children of families who could afford it; there was no perceived reason for the organized Jewish community to invest in Jewish camp. All this began to change with the publication of *Limud By the Lake*.¹² This study, which carried the authority of a respected academic institution, reported on a 3-year study of the educational possibilities in 18 Jewish overnight camps. Very briefly, the study presented two conclusions:

1. Jewish overnight camp has great educational potential, and can be effective in building Jewish identity and commitment in young people, and
2. As then constituted, Jewish overnight camps missed a great many educational opportunities.

These conclusions spurred a wave of philanthropic investment in Jewish overnight camps, notably (but certainly not exclusively) by the study’s sponsor, The AVI CHAI Foundation. Philanthropists – including the Harold Grinspoon Foundation – and local Jewish Federations began to invest in programs that would help Jewish overnight camps better capitalize on the many educational opportunities they present.

Jewish camps quickly perceived the philanthropists’ particular interest in enhancing camps’ Jewish educational possibilities, and accordingly many camps, including even those that previously had little interest in developing their Jewish programs, began proactively to propose and to envision Judaic enhancements they might undertake in order to attract philanthropic investment. This led to the creation of a very positive, mutually reinforcing cycle of Jewish enhancement that has moved the educational seriousness of the Jewish overnight camp world forward by light years.

There is every reason to believe that a similar positive, mutually reinforcing cycle – with philanthropic investment catalyzing Judaic enhancement – could be set up in the Jewish day camp world. Within the small sample of nine camps described in this study, philanthropic investment – in this case by UJA-Federation of NY – has already had a decisive impact in the creation or Judaic renaissance of three of the camps.

¹² Amy L. Sales and Leonard Saxe, *Limud by the Lake: Fulfilling the Educational Potential of Jewish Summer Camps*, published by the Center for Modern Jewish Studies at Brandeis University and commissioned by The AVI CHAI Foundation, October 2002.

CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

Over its 20-year life span, Foundation for Jewish Camp has helped move Jewish overnight camp from the margins to the center of the agenda of the North American Jewish community. Non-profit start-ups in the Jewish community regularly aspire to have the same success at gaining the community's attention that the field of overnight camping has achieved.

Today, the field of Jewish day camping is at least as well developed as the field of Jewish overnight camping was 20 years ago, at least with regard to the emergence of a cohort of day camps which recognize their Jewish potential and approach their Jewish program with seriousness and intentionality. In light of what this study has uncovered, **the time has come for the Jewish community to fully embrace the power and potential of the Jewishly intentional day camp, for the philanthropic world to invest, and for FJC to continue its efforts in applying its considerable clout to growing this high-potential field.**

We therefore recommend and anticipate FJC's continued leadership in executing the following:

1/ Expansion of a Day Camp Knowledge Center, with additional tools to measure not only day camp performance, satisfaction, and impact, but also what Jewish **outcomes** they engender. Such data might catalyze greatly enhanced Jewishly intentional day camps.

2/ Continued partnership with UJA-Federation of New York to encourage that organization's continued strategic interest and considerable and increasing philanthropic investment in day camps.

Specifically, FJC should seek to renew and expand both its Day Camp Incubator and its Jewish Coaching Project for additional cohorts in New York.

3/ Partnership with UJA-Federation of New York to leverage its example in other geographic areas so as to attract new Federation investment to the field of Jewish day camps in other communities throughout North America.

Specifically, FJC should seek funding to extend both the Day Camp Incubator program and the Jewish Coaching Project to camps beyond the greater New York area.

4/ With philanthropic support, the creation of resources which explore brand extension as a particularly efficient and effective model for creating new, Jewishly intentional day camps.

5/ The development of a repository of day camp expertise, readily accessible to relevant constituencies throughout the Jewish community.

6/ Catalyzing programming that explores areas of undeveloped potential strength in day camping. This might focus, especially, on finding ways to bring the "magic" of day camp into the rest of the year, and more deeply and meaningfully to provide Jewish engagement for parents and siblings of campers.

APPENDIX A

KEY INFORMANTS CONSULTED

The research leading to the development and presentation of this report benefitted from the expertise of more than a dozen practitioners who significantly impact the field of Jewish day camp. I am indebted to the following camp leaders, who graciously agreed to be interviewed for the project and who shared generously of their experience and expertise:

Anna Bennett – Planning Executive in the Jewish Life Department of UJA-Federation of NY. Ms. Bennett is the central executive at UJA Federation who deals with day camps.

Liz Broberg – Director of BB Day Camp Portland (OR) & Youth Engagement Director of BB Camp.

Randy Comensky – Senior Managing Director, JCC Day Camps Powered by Tamarack, Detroit MI.

Helene Drobenare – Executive Director of Young Judaea Sprout Lake Camps, New York. Helene supervises Camp Young Judaea Sprout Lake (an overnight camp), Sprout Brooklyn Day Camp, and Sprout Westchester Day Camp.

Michelle Koplan – Executive Director, BB Camp, Portland OR. Michelle supervises BB Camp (an overnight camp), BB Day Camp Portland, and BB Day Camp Lincoln City (OR).

Rabbi Michael Mellen – Trainer, facilitator and consultant, who serves as a faculty member in FJC's Jewish Consultancy Project, through which he served as coach to New Country Day Camp in New York City.

Eileen Price – Founder and Executive Director of In the City Camp, Atlanta GA

Dr. Judith Samuels – CEO of The Samuels Group, an active consultancy to philanthropies, global NGOs, nonprofit organizations and government agencies. Dr. Samuels is the author of a study of Jewish day camps under the sponsorship of FJC that is contemporaneous with this paper.

Rabbi Rami Schwartz – Director, Ramah Day Camp of Washington DC, a program of Camp Ramah of New England.

Shlomo Stern – Director, Camp Moshava Ba'ir NJ, Paramus NJ.

Lili Weiss-Voskidis – Director, New Country Day Camp, a project of The 14th Street Y in NYC.

Dikla Weitzner – Director of Camp Moshava Ba'ir, Toronto ON.

Jenni ZefTel – Director of Day Camp and Strategic Programs, FJC, New York.

NOTE: In all cases, the city noted indicates the location of the camp office, not necessarily of the camp site.

APPENDIX B

SITE VISITS CONDUCTED

In addition to interviews with the Key Informants identified in Appendix A, the research leading to the presentation of this report was informed by site visits to the camps which are principally highlighted in the body of the report. Site visits were conducted during the second and third weeks of July, 2018, and included visits to the following day camps:

- New Country Day Camp
- Young Judaea Sprout Brooklyn Day Camp
- Camp Moshava Ba'ir NJ

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ramie Arian is a consultant who works with Jewish camps, youth movements and others concerned with building Jewish identity and commitment in young people and adults. Current and recent clients include the Foundation for Jewish Camp, the JCC Association, the Union for Reform Judaism, the Jewish Agency for Israel North American Section, Young Judaea Global, the National Ramah Commission, NEXT: A division of Birthright Israel Foundation, The iCenter and The Jewish Education Project, among others.

Throughout his 40-year career he has worked with Jewish education, mainly in experiential settings. He was founding Executive Director of the Foundation for Jewish Camp, and has served as National Director of Young Judaea and as Vice President of the Wexner Heritage Foundation. He served for 15 years with the Youth Division of the Union for Reform Judaism, and enjoyed 22 summers at URJ camps.

A graduate of Brown University, he holds an MA, rabbinic ordination and a Doctorate of Divinity (honoris causa) from Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion.

FOUNDATION FOR JEWISH CAMP
acknowledges and appreciates the generous funding
from Allan and Nan Lipton of Portland, OR and Becket, MA
to FJC's Leadership & Innovation Fund,
which made the research and publication of this report possible.