



A Journey for a Lifetime

# Adopt a Program in 2011

## Camp Ramah in California

### Name that Peulah!

We're planning to kick off a new peulah (daily activity) this summer to keep our camp program fresh, asking our biggest stakeholders—our campers—to cast their votes as to which program to start.

*A gift of \$5,000 will secure necessary resources in leadership, program design and materials to allow us to kick off and run a new program activity for the 2011 summer.*

### Organic Garden

Campers will have an awesome time while learning the importance of environmental consciousness; issues of social justice; skills in gardening, nutrition and more...

*Several components are needed for this exciting project, including initial landscaping, supplies, leadership and curriculum. Gifts totaling \$12,000 will provide the seed money to start an organic garden for the 2011 summer.*

### Specialty Clinics

The summer experience offered to campers is enhanced by rotations of expert instructors, each of whom is highly accomplished in their specialty area, creating a very special level of excitement and inspiration as we keep our program fresh and cutting edge.

*Gifts totaling \$20,000 are needed to bring a wide range of experts to camp for the 2011 summer.*

### Strengthening and Enhancing Ramah's Music Program

Since the camp began, music has been an extraordinary means of expression and a critical element of the Ramah program and community, with potential enhancements to increase spirituality and joy to include:

- **Shira Boot Camp**, sending members of our music staff to an intensive training program that will help to enhance the quality of our daily shira (singing) program.

*A gift of \$2,000 will enable us to enroll our staff members in a boot camp program.*

- **Summer Concerts** featuring popular Jewish performing artists bring our camp community together, provide a great opportunity for ruach (positive spirit) and instill in campers a love of modern Jewish music.

*A gift of \$7,500 will allow us to offer ruach-filled camp concerts.*

- The **Live From...the Givah CD Project** engages campers and staff who demonstrate a strong inclination towards musical expression, strengthening our community by sharing their talent with others.

*To continue the impact of the Live from ... the Givah project for the next three years requires a total of \$45,000 in funding. Families committed to the project can help sponsor it with annual contributions at \$5,000 as Producers; \$2,500 as Engineers; or \$1,000 as Fans.*

### Staff Program Resource Center

Ramah staff are charged to design programs that are fun, engaging, and reflective of cutting-edge practices in experiential Jewish education, but both resources and physical space for 'thinking outside of the box' are currently scarce and limit the ability of our staff from reaching their full creative potential.

*Gifts totaling \$10,000 will allow us to expand and enhance our Staff Program Resource Center.*

### Ruach Mitzvah—Bringing to Life Jewish Ritual and Observance

This initiative centers on the work of Israeli artist Noah Greenberg, bringing campers closer to ritual observance by introducing them to the beauty of the objects used to celebrate Judaism.

*Gifts totaling \$13,000 will allow Camp Ramah in California to bring Noah Greenberg from Israel for five days, during which he will run Keshet Tefillin and one additional project.*



## 2011 Program Initiatives Camp Ramah in California



### **Name that Peulah!**

We're determined to start a new peulah (activity) this summer in order to keep our camp program fresh, and have decided to ask our biggest stakeholders – our campers! – to cast their votes as to which program to start.

The success of our camp program rests on a balance of tradition and innovation. Each summer, campers look forward to classic programs, such as cooking, dance, archery, basketball and more. At the same time, many campers are excited to try new activities, so our staff works hard to ensure that our overall programming remains innovative and ahead of the curve. We've learned over the years that campers get most excited about change when they lead the way. For example, several years ago we decided to enhance our cabin area for 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> graders by building a sport facility that campers could access during their free time. Campers were invited to vote on what to build through an online survey, and the majority indicated an interest in basketball and ga-ga. Through the generosity of a donor, we built these facilities and the campers were thrilled.

To determine which new activity to start we will design another online survey and ask campers to cast their votes.

***A gift of \$5,000 will secure necessary resources in leadership, program design and materials to allow us to kick off and run a new program activity for the 2011 summer.***

### **Organic Garden**

This summer we would like to plant an organic garden to be cared for by our campers. The Jewish people have an obligation to preserve natural resources and care for the environment – a concept known as “bal tashchit.” Camp is the perfect environment to instill in children this obligation, and caring for an organic garden is a wonderful way for campers to develop a commitment towards protecting the world.

Caring for a garden will enhance the summer experience in several ways. Campers will have an awesome time while learning:

- The importance of environmental consciousness
- Issues of social justice and the interrelatedness of all beings
- Cooperative skills and the compassion necessary for serving one's community
- Environmental sustainability is in itself a social justice issue; if they overuse resources, they are directly affecting others
- Skills in gardening, nutrition and more...

***Several components are needed for this exciting project, including initial landscaping, supplies, leadership and curriculum. Gift totaling \$10,000 will provide the seed money to start an organic garden for the 2011 summer.***

## Specialty Clinics

Each summer, Camp Ramah in California seeks to enhance the summer experience offered to campers by hosting a rotation of expert instructors, each of whom is highly accomplished in their specialty area but because of professional commitments are unable to join our staff for a full session. While campers are treated to a wonderful daily program of sports, swimming, arts and outdoor adventure through the lens of Jewish learning and living, the introduction to instructors who bring high-level experience in their field creates a very special level of excitement and inspiration. Some guest experts enhance an activity already provided at Ramah (for example, basketball), while others expose campers to completely new areas of interest (for example, rap music).

Amongst those who joined our program the past couple of summers were an assistant coach from the NBA Development League, the soccer coach for the US Maccabi team and a chef/restaurateur specializing in organic cooking. Experts worked with campers in small groups, running workshops or clinics over the course of two days to one week. Possible areas of instruction for 2011 include:

1. Sports – basketball, boogie boxing, soccer, baseball and volleyball
2. Aquatics – water polo
3. Arts –sculpture
4. Performance Art – improv, music, songwriting
5. Cooking – baking, organic cooking
6. Media Arts – newspaper, photography
7. ...and more!

***Gifts totaling \$20,000 are needed to bring a wide range of experts to camp for the 2011 summer.***

## Strengthening and Enhancing Ramah’s Music Program

Music is an extraordinary means of expression and a critical element of the Ramah program and community since the camp began. Through song voices unite in spirit, spirituality, praise and joy. There are many ways that Jewish music is incorporated into the summer experience. Some components of our music program are quite strong and are the source of positive feedback. Constructive feedback has been gathered on other elements of our music program that we are determined to strengthen for the 2011 summer.

Specific initiatives we would like to pursue include:

### **1) Shira Boot Camp**

In efforts to strengthen the quality of our daily shira (singing) program, we would like to send members of our music staff to “Shira Boot Camp.” Through this intensive training, our summer staff will learn skills in song leading from renowned experts, as well as new songs to incorporate into our repertoire.

***A gift of \$2,000 will enable us to enroll our staff members in a boot camp program.***

## 2) Summer Concert

Each summer Camp Ramah in California aims to offer a summer concert featuring a popular Jewish performing artist. Concerts bring our camp community together, provide a great opportunity for ruach (positive spirit) and instill in campers a love of Jewish music. Concerts also show campers that Jewish music is modern and evolving, thereby helping us grow the next generation of Jewish musicians from within our own community.

*A gift of \$7,500 will allow us to offer a ruach-filled camp concert.*

## Staff Program Resource Center

Staff members at Camp Ramah in California are charged to think creatively throughout each day of their work. Programs must be designed and implemented that are fun, engaging, safe and reflective of cutting-edge practices in experiential Jewish education.

While staff members at camp are known for ‘thinking outside of the box’ as well as being creative with the basic materials available, there are various resources which are currently scarce and therefore limit the ability of our staff from reaching their full creative potential. Currently, approximately 175 staff members share one small office equipped with three computers, one printer, one copy machine and limited “on the spot” guidance from senior staff members. This space doubles as both an office for professional work and a computer lounge for personal communication for the staff, since computers are prohibited inside the cabins.

For the 2011 summer we’d like to enhance the Friedman Library, located in the very center of camp, to also function as a Staff Program Resource Center devoted solely to the creative development of programs. This enhanced space would feature a second set of computers, printers and a copy machine. The Friedman Library is also conveniently located next to our Education Staff Office, providing access to staff who can offer the additional professional guidance needed for program development.

*Gifts totaling \$10,000 will allow us to expand and enhance our Staff Program Resource Center.*



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# **Ruach Mitzvah**

## **Bringing to Life Jewish Ritual & Observance**

Campers at Ramah are engaged in Jewish living through a summer program of experiential education. Through formal and informal activities they are exposed to Jewish values and practice such as Shabbat observance, t'fillah, tikkun olam and more. The challenge of the summer program is to extend Jewish practice into the year-round communities in which they live.

**Ruach Mitzvah** is an initiative to address the importance of year-round Jewish practice through the artistic exploration and creation of Jewish ritual objects used throughout the year. The program centers on the work of Israeli artist Noah Greenberg and brings campers closer to ritual observance by introducing them to the beauty of the objects used to celebrate Judaism. Noah serves as an artist-in-residence for five days, bringing his energy, creativity and spirituality.

### **KESHER TEFFILIN**

Tefillin are a manifestation of a Jew's physical connection to God – a spiritual conduit linking them powerfully yet intangibly. Tefillin are almost a distillation of the entire Torah, so much so that they often represent the Torah in the liturgy. And yet, they are such an esoteric mitzvah, obscure and mysterious – unexplainable and incomprehensible. To a young Jew becoming a bar or bat mitzvah, the tefillin should be an object of intense spiritual excitement. Sadly, in the modern world they are often viewed as archaic remnants of a previous age, no longer relevant in the high-speed world of computers and video games.

***Kesher Tefillin*** is a project created to help give a budding Jew spiritual ownership of a mitzvah that might otherwise be alien. As a Jew approaches adulthood, ***Kesher Tefillin*** facilitates and empowers their understanding of this beautiful mitzvah with a fusion of "hands on" creativity, learning and tangible results – a pair of kosher Tefillin!

Tefillin today are made with very sophisticated equipment and technology. Heavy leather is formed in hydraulic presses and then sophisticated computer-controlled machinery is used to shape, mold and color the tefillin. The results are, of course, beautiful. But Moshe himself did not have hydraulic presses nor was there sophisticated machinery in the Sinai desert. Yet Moshe put on tefillin – as have Jews for untold generations since then.



Through ***Kesher Tefillin***, up to 18 campers entering the 8<sup>th</sup> grade will handcraft their own tefillin in a way that Moshe might have done, while learning the Halacha involved in creating and wearing them. Taking a raw piece of parchment, each camper will cut, mold, fold, emboss and color it, creating their very own tefillin. They then select and insert the parchment scrolls, attach and tie the straps. Throughout the process, campers will study sources reviewing the holiness of the tefillin and

the Halacha of making and using them. Upon completion, they will don the new tefillin with the appropriate kavanot (intentions) and blessings.

Ramah campers who have participated in this project have been positively impacted by the experience. A parent of a camper who participated in 2009 shared:

*Ever since Ben came home from camp last summer and presented me with the Tefillin he made in Noah Greenberg's camp workshop, I've been in contact with Noah. I first wrote to tell him how blown away I was with not only the Tefillin but with Ben's overwhelming sense of pride over having made them.*

*In all of Ben's years of Jewish school and camp, this one activity "flipped a switch" in him and he has never been more serious about - or respectful of - his Jewish roots. Ben has proudly worn his Tefillin not just at our Reform synagogue but at Chabad services and at home, as well. This from a kid who previously fought us all the way when came to having him put on a yarmulke on Friday nights!*

*Something magical happened in Noah's class...*

One camp director reported:

*For two hours each morning, twelve campers of varying backgrounds and interests gathered to work with Noah. By the end of the first session, one camper who had expressed misgivings about having to miss basketball came up to Noah and said, "This is SO cool! I am so glad that I signed up for this!" His sentiments were unanimous. Our expectations were not only met but were wildly exceeded by this incredible group of campers. And as we hoped, they were incredibly excited about truly owning the mitzvah of Tefillin. They could not wait to put them on and when they did, the feeling was electric.*

The success has been so great since we first started this project in 2008 that we are looking to continue to work with Noah Greenberg!

### **ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS**

Beyond the select individuals who will participate in Keshet Tefillin, many others will benefit from Noah's talent through one of two additional programs:

#### ***1) Tree of Life Shtender***

*Shtender (shten'der): a stand used to support books as an aid to prayer and study while standing upright. Traditionally used in the Jewish home, study hall or house of prayer. [Yiddish, f. G dial. stand - upright]*

The Shtender is the traditional accessory of both prayer (the spiritual and emotional aspect of Judaism - the service of the heart) and study (the great intellectual tradition of Talmud Torah - service of the mind). A special kind of Shtender was envisioned by artists Noah Greenberg and David Moss which would appear quite ordinary from the outside, but would in fact be a compartmentalized treasure chest for all the ritual objects of daily, weekly and yearly use in the hands-on practice of Judaism. The decorative motif for the Shtender is the trees and plants of Israel, including, the seven species by which the Land of Israel is praised. Each Shtender object incorporates a plant appropriate to its particular mitzvah. The 'Tree of Life' theme unites the whole work, reflecting the living Torah that informs and animates every aspect of Jewish religious devotion. Enclosed in the Shtender are objects such as a tzedakah box, Shabbat candlesticks, a kiddush set, etrog box and seder plate.

**"Wow! This is so cool,"** was the reaction commonly heard from campers who have viewed the Shtender at Ramah. Through an interactive presentation, Greenberg introduces each object to

campers and discusses with them its purpose and use. He asks incredible questions, engaging them in the presentation. They are figuratively (and almost literally) climbing all over him. Over the course of five days campers entering grades 3 to 8 are split into groups to meet with Noah and to view the Shtender. Campers are inspired both as practicing Jews and, particularly appropriate to the camp setting, as artists.

The Tree of Life Shtender has already been widely received across over 40 Jewish communal and educational settings, including, including Camp Ramah in California in 2008, other Jewish summer camps and the Skirball Museum. After Greenberg visited one school, an administrator exclaimed:

*Your presentations to all of our children elicited an overwhelming sense of interest and enthusiasm from our young charges. The attention to detail and wide breadth of topics that you weaved into the fabric of your presentations were a wonderful didactic tool; your artistry was sheer genius...*

## ***2) The Development of a Work of Art: Living Through the Creative Process***

A brilliant idea is just that – an idea! How does it turn into a work of art? How do we make it happen?

This seminar will explore the process of taking an idea and making it into a work of art; perhaps even an edition of works of art. Since the Tree of Life Shtender is Noah Greenberg's "signature", the seminar will begin by exploring that very project briefly. It will then visit a new project which is now in process, following it through the stages between the "concept" and the "reality" with visuals, anecdotes and discussion.

Some of the topics that will be addressed are:

- How do we get an idea for a work of art – both conceptually and artistically?
- What are we trying to accomplish with our work?
- What will the piece look like?
- How can we assess if it will be 'any good' – both before and after it is created?
- "How do we get there from here?"
- Do we want to make multiples of your work? How do we do that?
- What about economics?

The participants will see a complex, three-dimensional Jewish art project from beginning to end. They will follow the footsteps of an artist through the process: from conception to design to creation of an original piece, to the production of an edition of facsimiles.

***Gifts totaling \$13,000 will allow Camp Ramah in California to bring Noah Greenberg from Israel for five days, during which he will run Kesher Tefillin and one additional project. To date we have gifts for \$11,500 committed, with an additional \$2,500 still needed.***

# Photo Album

## Camp Ramah in California Ruach Mitzvah Initiative



Noah Greenberg Pulls a Seder Plate out of the Shtender



Two 8<sup>th</sup> grade campers craft their own tefillin



Camper tries on her new tefillin



Noah Greenberg helps campers make their own tefillin



Camper hard at work



The finished product – kosher tefillin

# *Live from...the Givah CD Project*

## *Camp Ramah in California*

### VISION

One of the primary modes of Jewish expression is music. Throughout time Jews have been able to express their commitment to Jewish values and Jewish living through music, in a joyous, artistic way that links people together. The combination of melody and lyric allows people to commit to community, God, repair of the world, Shabbat and Israel, amongst a variety of other ideals.

Camp Ramah in California combines Jewish living with recreational activities in a way that highlights Jewish musical expression as one of many potential mediums. Campers and staff come alive and affirm their commitment to Judaism through song. All who participate in Jewish song benefit, be they artists or audience.

The *Live From...the Givah CD Project* engages in Jewish practice those campers and staff who demonstrate a strong inclination towards musical expression. Young artists have the opportunity to learn Jewish and/or Israeli music, grow their skills as musicians or vocalists and contribute to the strength of our community by sharing their talent with others. Everyone in the Ramah community benefits from the CD itself, which contains melodies for liturgy and Shabbat meals used across the world in Conservative settings, along with Israeli rock songs. Listening to the CD increases the ability of campers and staff to be active, practicing Jews capable of leadership responsibility during their time spent at Ramah, throughout college and into the families they will build as adults.

### OBJECTIVES

Campers and staff who participate in the CD project as artists:

- Learn Jewish and Israeli music that reflects the values articulated in the Mission Statement of Camp Ramah in California
- Master technical skills in singing, playing an instrument, blending and recording
- Perform their work in front of a live audience
- Work as part of a team of artists in a supportive, collaborative manner
- Participate in a culminating project by recording their work in a lasting manner
- Educate others on the songs recorded and their messages

Campers and staff who make up the audience during performances and who receive the CD are:

- Being treated to great showmanship by the performers and enjoying the fruits of their labor
- Expanding their knowledge of Jewish and Israeli music by hearing and learning music central to the Conservative movement
- Learning new melodies for liturgy and Shabbat meals



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- Receiving a keepsake from the summer that extends the Ramah experience into their year-round lives

In short, the ***Live from...the Givah CD Project*** fills all campers and staff with a sense of pride in the Ramah community and their Jewish identity, as well as increasing their knowledge of Jewish and Israeli music.

## **PROJECT STATUS**

Camp Ramah in California has experienced great success thus far with music projects. Over the past twelve years a total of six CDs have been produced: *Beyond the Hills* (1998), *V'abanta* (2003) and *Live from...the Givah v1 to 5* (2006 – 2010). Each of these projects has been met with applause and appreciation as artists perform during the summer and when Ramah'niks listen to the CD. Since its inception, the *Live from ... the Givah* project has specifically enhanced the scope of singing for Ramah'niks. At the end of the summer campers and staff eagerly await the release of the CD and when by the time they return the next summer, they have learned many of the songs recorded.

To continue the impact of the *Live from ... the Givah* project for the next three years requires **a total of \$45,000 in funding**. Families committed to the project can help sponsor it with annual contributions as follows:

- ***Producers* - \$5,000**
- ***Engineers* - \$2,500**
- ***Fans* - \$1,000**