

March 2022



Dear Ramah Community,

It is a great pleasure to bring greetings on behalf of the Jewish Theological Seminary as we mark the 75th anniversary of the founding of Camp Ramah and honor the inspired leadership of Mitch Cohen as he steps down from his role as National Director.

Founded in 1947 by JTS in partnership with the Chicago Council of the United Synagogue of America, Ramah was integral to the Seminary's post-war mission of cultivating a Jewishly educated and engaged community in North America. JTS understood that a summer camp environment would be an ideal way to prepare young Jews "for informed participation in Jewish life." As a laboratory for crafting Jewish learning and living experiences and an incubator of experimentation and new initiatives, Ramah would also nurture and inspire the next generation of Jewish leaders.

What began as an experiment with one camp in Wisconsin has grown far beyond the wildest dreams of its founders. Ramah has demonstrated again and again the power of what JTS cultivates in its student body and beyond—an integrated approach – with head, heart, and hand—to a meaningful life for American Jews.

Mitch Cohen's tenure as Director of the National Ramah Commission has been essential to the success of this latest chapter in the evolution of the Ramah Camping Movement. Under his leadership, Ramah grew in size and reach, brought experiential Jewish education to new heights, expanded its commitment to inclusion, mental health, and personal wellness - and more. In so doing, Ramah deepened the Jewish engagement of thousands of children and young adults, transforming them in ways that will not only enrich their lives but will strengthen the Jewish people for generations to come.

We celebrate Ramah in general and Mitch in particular tonight—a joy for Ramah, JTS, the Conservative movement and the Jewish people.

Warmly,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shuly".

Dr. Shuly Rubin Schwartz
Chancellor