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Rabbi Mitchell Cohen

March 2022 / Adar II 5782

Dear Mitch,

As President of the National Ramah Commission, it is my great honor to salute my dear friend and rabbi for your close to two decades of stellar leadership as our National Director. I do so from a somewhat unique perspective, as we were at camp together when you began your Ramah journey in the summer of 1979 in Ojai, CA. While you were Rosh Tefillah and I was waiting tables in Chavurah, we forged a strong bond playing hoops. You were part of an east coast infiltration, recruited by the then-director Rabbi Glen Karonsky. You modeled a level and consistency of observance that made a lasting impression on me and so many others. When Glen asked me to be a Rosh Edah, I flew to New York to meet with you and learn the tricks of the trade. We also spent a year together in Jerusalem during my junior year abroad. You had just finished law school and were taking classes in rabbinical school. You pulled me aside and suggested that I try out a new level of observance. These small moments of personal connection were hugely impactful on my journey. I have such fond memories of being on the hike in Ein Gedi when you met your bashert. I'm still in shock that Santa Barbara surfer girl Cari even gave you the time of day.

Ramah so deeply impacted me because I was able to model the behavior of such an outstanding collection of mentors. So many of the tools that help me successfully navigate my personal and professional relationships were honed at camp. Ramah gives us all a taste of how sweet and nourishing Jewish community can be. We spend our life trying to replicate that beautiful experience. Not only did I follow you as a Rosh Edah at Ramah California, I also followed you onto the NRC. Of course, you came in as National Director while I started as incoming Ramah California President then Ramah NorCal President before taking on my current role. I've spent these last two decades at the board table working in support of your ever-increasing vision for how Ramah can impact our world. You set the standard for attracting the best and the brightest of professionals and lay leaders to function in true collaboration. You constantly promote the sharing of best practices while providing essential and consistent support as needed. You are a master communicator and have significantly raised the bar on the funds that we can raise in support of that vision. Most impressively, you have done so with minimal focus on yourself. You simply do the work, creating and fostering quality relationships while continuing to model the behavior that inspires us all.

I could not be more proud of all that you have accomplished while always remaining true to the mensch that you are. Of course all this while knocking down jump shot after jump shot. I salute you as did your Machon back in the day: "Mitchell Howard Cohen, you are so beautiful."

With love & great respect,



Jay Reisbaum

President