

POCONOS

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Adat Shalom, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

My initial contact with Camp Ramah in 1963 was by virtue of the fact that both of my parents, my father Menachem Lehrer, z"l, and my mother Rachel,

were members of the teaching staff. Their love of Judaism and Israel brought them to Ramah. I am constantly reminded of the stories my father used to tell at Ramah of his days in the underground in pre-1948 Israel. These accounts fascinated those who had never learned this part of our history. Sitting around a campfire on the far side of the lake and listening to stories of modern Jewish warriors was a dramatic moment for all who were there and a precious moment for me as well, even though I had heard the same stories countless times at home.

From the time I was eight years old, Ramah was an integral part of my life. Many of the friendships and relationships that I forged in my years as a camper, on Ramah Seminar, and as a staff member are still part of my life. As a Jewish educator, I am often in contact with colleagues throughout the world, and I remember many of them as campers and staffers. Now, of course, they are rabbis, educators, and leaders within the Conservative Movement. I venture to say that many of the most influential people in the Conservative Movement would not have reached their current positions without the immersion in Judaism and Hebrew that they received in those great summers at Camp Ramah in the Poconos.

The next time you visit any of the Ramah camps, take a good look at the campers, especially at some of the most ill-behaved ones. They are our future leaders.