

EKC: LOOKING TOWARD THE FUTURE



EMMA KAUFMANN CAMP: THE LEGACY

Since its founding more than 115 years ago as an escape for Jewish children from urban overcrowding, pollution and the tuberculosis epidemic, the JCC's Emma Kaufmann Camp (EKC) has served as a haven for campers and staff each summer. As we celebrate over 50 years on Cheat Lake, EKC is that special place where over 850 campers and staff experience the life-changing transformation that only Jewish overnight summer camp can provide. While over half our campers reside in the greater Pittsburgh metropolitan area, we now serve campers from 35 states and 7 countries around the world, nurtured by an ever-expanding EKC Friends and Alumni Network from nearly every corner of the planet.

EKC is built upon connections, values, growth and fun—you see it every day as campers and staff set out on their individual journey of self-discovery throughout the summer.

The EKC experience, curated through a Jewish lens, fosters community for campers and staff, and celebrates each individual's uniqueness. Camp life has been enhanced each summer since 2006 through an Israel seminar and leadership experience for staff-in-training (SIT) that has served 625 EKC'ers. We recently added a supplemental experience in Poland as well.

Studies demonstrate that Jewish overnight camping is one of the strongest ways to keep children and teens engaged in Judaism. EKC leadership strives to integrate these important considerations by creating aspirational arcs in skill building and programming that challenge and inspire each camper. We believe that the lynchpin of successful overnight camps is fostering high-quality programming and specialties to stimulate new experiences, new skills and new proficiencies.





CAMPER RECRUITMENT GROWTH: RUNNING OUT OF HOUSING

The last three summers saw continued growth of registration. Camper retention has averaged over 85%, close to 10% over the national benchmark. As campers continue to “age out” of units, 65% of campers this summer were not even enrolled at EKC five years ago.

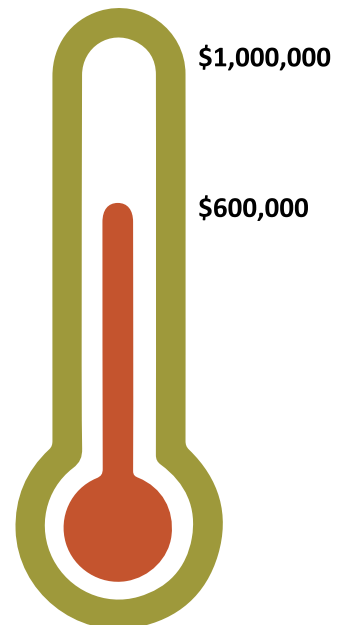
Similar to most overnight camps, our greatest growth has been with the youngest units, Sabra and Kineret, with growing wait lists each session limited by both bunk and staff capacity. EKC has provided numerous registration options for these youngest age camp units, with many children experiencing camp for only one or two weeks. By the time campers reach adolescence, registration is limited to more traditional session options. Sabra/Kineret registrations have increased 53% (or 123 camper registrations) since 2019. These two units are quickly migrating to the Halutzim Unit and ultimately to Teen Village— the only unit at camp that has operated below capacity the past three summers.



THE PLAN: EXPANDING THE HALUTZIM EXPERIENCE

As our safe and successful summer 2023 draws to a close, we are excited to share two interconnected capital improvement campaigns that support both increased camper capacity and programmatic need. With the generous support of two gifts* totalling \$600,000, we are embarking on a \$1 million campaign to implement these improvements.

**Many thanks to James & Nancy Wolf and John M. Wolf, Jr. & Martha O. Wolf*



■ HALUTZIM HOUSING AND PROGRAM SPACE

With Halutzim as the gateway to grow the number of teens at camp coupled with the rapidly increasing pipeline of younger campers expected to enroll in a unit already filled to capacity, our priority is to expand the Halutzim unit at Claire & Vern Reingold Park.

This plan increases the number of available beds for Halutzim campers from its current capacity of 96 to 128. This will expand the eligible number of campers transitioning to Teen Village by nearly 35%. It simultaneously increases both the SIT and staff pipeline to serve the growing camper population at EKC.

Consistent with our experience of repurposing existing infrastructure whenever possible, we would convert an existing 2,000 square-foot maintenance facility adjacent to the Halutzim Unit into a larger, state-of-the-art living space for up to 32 additional Halutzim campers. A neighboring 1,000 square-foot brick maintenance facility will also be converted into a flex programming space for the entire camp.

■ MAINTENANCE RELOCATION

A 6,000 square-foot new maintenance structure will be built and located in a more remote location—removed from the living and program areas of camp. This new facility will have electricity, plumbing and the ability to store vehicles and boats inside during the winter months, furthering our ability to do maintenance projects indoors year-round.

HOW YOU CAN HELP INVEST IN THE FUTURE OF EKC CAMPING

Please join us as we raise the last **\$400,000** in this **\$1 million** campaign to enhance and expand the EKC experience.

Our goal is to raise the full **\$1 million** by **December 31, 2023**, to begin construction as soon as possible.

Your ongoing support will help ensure the future of this invaluable community asset, and together we can take the next steps to ensure the future of EKC.

PLEASE JOIN US!

Sincerely,

Aaron Cantor, EKC Director

Fara Marcus, JCC Chief Development and Marketing Officer

Teddi Horvitz, EKC Alumni and JCC Development Associate

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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Give today at

<https://bit.ly/EKCDonations>





IN ORDER TO GROW, WE NEED TO INVEST

The following improvements have been largely funded through private donations over the past decade.

Major capital projects completed and totaling more than \$9 million include:

- Dining Hall expansion, renovation and addition of gluten-free kitchen
- Upgraded camper housing and bathroom additions for the Sabra, Kineret, and Halutzim units
- ADA accessibility within living areas, restrooms and dining halls
- Zen Den, a sensory space to foster inclusion that is accessible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for any camper or staff member. The Zen Den is appropriate for individuals with invisible disabilities such as ADHD, autism and anxiety disorders, as well as neurotypical individuals.
- SIT and retreat housing at Beit Chosky, with new specialty training kitchen and dance/exercise studio added to the lower level
- Wolf Family Aquatics Center with three pools and remodeled bath house
- Security improvements at the front gate and throughout camp
- Renovation of the outdoor amphitheater
- Renovation of staff lounge and new staff housing unit
- Upgraded staff fitness center
- New office and welcome center
- New outdoor covered pavilions
- New steps to lakefront and new boat dock area
- New tennis courts with pickleball
- Water ski boat and program improvements

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