

2021 - Camp Onas Annual Report  
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Camp Onas was open this summer! Campers were excited to come to camp and staff looked forward to providing the best Camp Onas community experience possible. Holly and Matt Hecht, Camp Directors, followed recommendations from the CDC and ACA (American Camp Association) to mitigate the risk of COVID 19 transmission. Parts of the many mitigation efforts included running at two-thirds capacity in order to distance effectively, as well as campers observing 10 days of quarantine and pre-arrival testing before their camp session began. No cases developed as a result in the seven weeks of sessions. The Friends Camp Association Board and the Directors felt strongly that providing as many campers as allowed within those restrictions with a positive summer experience would be essential to the ongoing health of the camp community, campers, staff, and families alike, especially after the last sixteen months of quarantine and remote social interaction.

The 2021 Camp Onas summer sessions were a bright spot in a year filled with challenges. The Camp staff came together to create a complete and safe summer program, and the Board is proud of the way Onas persevered and even advanced amid uncertainty. Other sleep-over camps, facing the same adversities, reached out to Camp Onas for advice and techniques for implementing safe practices. We have a lot to celebrate, but being closed in 2020, and running at reduced capacity this summer took its toll on us.

Last spring, when the Directors and the Board resolved to run this year's summer program, we knew it would cost more to operate a reduced capacity Camp Onas than tuition could cover. But safely running this year's program was the most important thing we could do for the long-term health of the Onas community, to say nothing of the well-being of the campers and staff who were looking forward to it. We made the decision to operate at a loss.

Long-term planning can't stop, though, just because of the pandemic. The need to replace both crumbling 50-year-old Shower Houses meant that construction had to begin this fall in order to be completed by next summer. This project will have an enormously positive impact on Camp life, including replacing sorely outdated plumbing and allowing all people to have privacy while toileting and showering. While some funds have previously been set aside to launch this project, we are working on financing, and we still seek grants and dedicated donations.

The Board and the Camp staff are in the process of reconceiving our Strategic Plan for the next five years. We know that we cannot continue to defer maintenance but recognize the challenges that an aging physical plant can cause. We continue to commit to increasing diversity of all kinds among campers, staff, and Board, even as the pandemic has impacted many families' ability to pay the full costs. Therefore, the need for campership support grows even greater now than before. While the loyalty and generosity of Camp families, alumni, and (f)Friends continue to make a difference, Onas also seeks donations from its wider community to help us weather the storm.

Before I finish, I want to express the gratitude of the Friends Camp Association Board as well as my own gratitude to those of this community who have already made gifts to Camp Onas, including the increased annual gift from this Monthly Meeting. Thank you so much!