

# Friends Camp Winter Director's Report February 2020 Anna Hopkins

## **Looking Forward to Camp 2020**

Registration for 2020 camp sessions opened on November 1. We are about 20% more enrolled as of February 1 last year, and 67% of the way to our total target registration. Sessions for our younger campers enroll more quickly than for teenage campers, a trend which has continued over the last few years. Working with first time, returning, and especially families receiving scholarship requires a good deal of one-on-one conversations and organization for me. The primary method of marketing for camp is word-of-mouth, although I have also made efforts to especially target potential teenage camper with online advertisements.

Staffing is also progressing well for 2020, with our entire leadership team hired and more than half of the camp counselors hired. Our leadership team is mostly returning for the summer, although former camp staff members Sarah McCullough and Erin Carr are stepping into new roles as head cook and office manager respectively. Last summer's cook and office manager are still involved at camp and will be spending time on property to train the new leadership staff. Such succession planning is important and helps smooth the transition significantly. My biggest hiring challenge for this year is lack of racial diversity in our applicants. This is not a new problem, but one that is significant and ongoing.

I am working on developing a new evaluation system for our camp staff; I believe that the job of camp counselor should not only be fun but also help develop world and career skills for counselors. Along with more clear and thoughtful performance evaluation and goal-setting, we are compensating camp counselors more fairly this year with a base salary of \$275/ week for a first-year staff member. I hope we can continue this trend of raising camp salaries and important commitment to our seasonal staff members.

## **Looking Forward to Camp 2021**

"I have an idea!" Our former Assistant Director Jeff Adelberg used to tease me

for how often I would exclaim about ideas. But... I truly have had an idea for camp 2021. Our session dates are determined by the New England Yearly Meeting Sessions Calendar. For 2021, the summer season is extremely “late,” with the first week of camp not beginning until June 27<sup>th</sup> (this year it is June 21<sup>st</sup>). I believe we could add an extra week or partial week of camp before our traditional sessions in order to help meet the demand we have for our youngest session and generate some additional revenue. I want to price out some options for this schedule, and it would come with some challenges, but I think it would be an exciting thing to try for our 2021 season.

## **Rental Groups & Camp**

### **Reunion**

Groups rentals this year are similar to previous years, including the Vassalboro Quarterly Meeting retreat, Art Camp, a large group retreat for the Lerner Foundation, and the Common Ground Fair weekend. We are also hosting a large alumni reunion the weekend of August 21<sup>st</sup>- 24<sup>th</sup>. Due to a scheduling conflict with this group, Moses Brown School will not be coming in 2020. We hope that over 100 alumni will attend the reunion in August, and it will be staffed by summer staff who remain at camp. I continue to look for assistance with operating and hosting late summer and fall weekends, since working all summer and every autumn weekend is not a sustainable model for a camp director.

### **Development**

On Giving Tuesday this year, we launched a “Give Monthly” program for Friends Camp called the Nest Club. This allows donors to give an automatic monthly gift to camp. I am working hard to engage this group of donors using monthly points of contact and connecting them to the importance of camp’s mission. So far, we have 26 members of the Nest Club. Individual giving is up slightly compared with last year, and I am appreciative of the Development Committee’s work. Additionally, I invited some young staff alums in the Boston area to help stuff and mail the winter appeal letter. This was a great way to build engagement—plus, many of them made special requests of folks they knew and their families.

### **Organizational Projects and Visioning**

This year, we are doing our first financial review with an accounting firm in Portland. Robb (camp treasurer) has been an enormous help with this review, and it

has taken a significant amount of time to sort through the materials they need, ask questions, and explain our processes.

The camp committee also began conversations about a strategic planning and visioning process for Friends Camp and expressed interest in helping to guide a process. I had a meeting with Elizabeth Reuthe, who has rich experience with executive coaching and strategic planning, and I have some ideas about how to move forward. However, this process will take significant time and investment from others beyond me and I am looking for commitment from a sub- committee or ad hoc group before we dive fully into this process.

Warmly  
, Anna