



## **You've Got a Friend in Yitro**

**July 7, 2016**

Over the past 24 hours, OSRUI has been honored, privileged, and overjoyed to welcome Yitro Fellows from the Foundation of Jewish Camping to Oconomowoc for a day of sharing, learning, and experiences.

### ***What is a Yitro Fellow?***

“With the continued support of the AVI CHAI Foundation, the Foundation for Jewish Camp has launched a third cohort of the highly acclaimed Yitro Leadership Program. Yitro III will provide training for Jewish camp assistant and associate directors from a diverse cross section of resident Jewish summer camps, giving them the skills and resources to enhance the Jewish experience at their home camp.

Over the course of nineteen months, participants will convene for five sessions for a total of nineteen days of intensive training. Using experts and recognized leaders from various disciplines, the program will challenge the fellows to widen their lens of Jewish leadership in order to enhance the Jewish culture and experience at their home camps. Furthermore, the Yitro Leadership Program will build a network of camp assistant and associate directors who will support one another in developing their skills as Jewish leaders and educators.

Yitro III Participants will:

- Experience personal and professional growth in order to improve the Jewish experience at their home camp for their campers and staff.
- Hone skills regarding camp staff leadership development, supervision, management and mentorship, while exploring Jewish foundations of these skills.
- Engage in conversation of the vision and mission of his/her camp with his/her camp director.
- Create and implement an individual action plan in consultation with the Yitro faculty and his/her camp director, focused specifically on enhancing Jewish life at camp.
- Work one on one with a skilled advisor, including a visit from the Yitro faculty advisor during the summer.
- Build a network of colleagues from Jewish camps across North America”

### ***Which Yitro fellows visited OSRUI?***

We had an FJC faculty member as well as assistant directors from URJ GUCI, URJ Crane Lake, Pinemere, and Capital Camps

### ***What did they want to see at OSRUI?***

We helped create a schedule of so that the group can observe and experience, as well as a few people they can interact with, to get a real sense of the essence of OSRUI and showcase aspects we do truly exceptionally. The goals for the visit included:

- a tour of OSRUI with Jerry Kaye, Susan Alexander, and Albert Marks
- Meeting with other stakeholders involved with Jewish education and programming
- Meeting with other stakeholders involved with staff engagement, development and recruitment
- An opportunity for the fellows to observe/experience some part of your camp program in action

Our visiting Fellows have expressed interest in exploring music/song sessions and how Judaism *physically* fits into the camp.



### ***What did their day at OSRUI look like?***

Their day began with a complete and comprehensive tour of camp with Jerry followed by a tour of the various Tiferet studios (dance, drama, music, digital media, and art) from our Tiferet Rosh, Evan. They then got a chance to see our *ivrit* (hebrew) lessons in action (we use the sandwich method. We say the ivrit, the english, then the ivrit, and then clap. Ivrit Hebrew Ivrit (clap)). After learning about camp words like *agam* (lake) and *ohelim* (tents), our fellows had

the opportunity to meet with our *segel* (faculty), rashei limmudim, and rashei ivrit from each eidot during a snack and learn where there was an amazing conversation about limmudim, ivrit, and tfilot, and in general, Judaism and how it is a pillar and a core of OSRUI, not just an afterthought. “OSRUI is a Jewish camp, not a camp of Jews, and we are proud of this” said one participant. Following the snack and learn, the fellows headed downstairs to see Tzofim in action and to learn about our primitive living eidot. Next, the fellows headed to the private dining hall to have a dinner with Albert, Susan, and Jerry to discuss social media, recruitment, scholarship, staff engagement, development and recruitment. At the request of the fellows, they then got to take an amazing pontoon ride on Lac La Belle with Jerry and Susan followed by a visit to Gesher for siyuum and then to Chalutzim to discuss pop culture and modern times in Israel. After a stop at folk night with Avodah it was time for lilah tov! Today, they were invited to Gesher services where the Gesher *kehilah* (community) honored them with an aliyah today before an amazing torah reading. We then said l’hitraot, not goodbye, but see you next time.



It was an honor, privilege, and joy to host [Foundation for Jewish Camp](#) Yitro fellows from [URJ Crane Lake Camp](#), [URJ Goldman Union Camp Institute \(GUCI\)](#), [Pinemere Camp](#), and [Capital Camps](#). They learned from us and we learned from them!