



## **SOUTHAMPTON SUMMER DAY CAMP**

May 26, 2020

Dear SSDC 2020 Parents, Campers and Staff Members,

All of you have chosen us because you know that Southampton Summer Day Camp is a fabulous, unique, and SAFE place for all of you each summer. For 46 seasons the one word which resonates to me is "TRUST."

And so, the last few months have been at times hopeful, overwhelming, and uncertain. Jacque and I, along with many support staff, have combed through miles of data, guidelines, and detailed recommendations from experts. From personal protective equipment, thermometers, hand sanitation stations, cleaning supplies, COVID-19 testing kits, and additional nursing staff to revamped foodservice and activity plans...we were well prepared and ready to go.

As this worldwide tragedy has evolved, we approached our task as if we were travelling on two parallel rails of one track. The first rail represented the safety and welfare of ALL of

you, because this disease could potentially reach any of our campers, staff and extended families and friends. The second, and perhaps less crucial rail represented the actual activity and event scheduling and programming which would need to be modified as we worked our way forward simultaneously toward opening day.

As we progressed further down the track, we noted the loss or severe modification of one beloved SSDC activity or event after another. Ultimately the two rails seemed to lead us so far away from a “real SSDC summer camp experience” that we knew we could not confidently achieve either of our two main original goals. Primarily, asking any of you to attend camp this summer with the caveat, “NOTHING CAN BE GUARANTEED”, is untenable for Jacque and me considering the uncertainty which currently dominates the medical landscape.

Jacque and I could just not imagine an SSDC summer with so many restrictions and potential risks for all of you. Putting the health issues aside, just try to envision our camp with NO sports leagues, NO club choices, NO Late Nights with Smores at the campfire with “Aunt” Jacque, NO SSDC Olympics, NO All Star games, NO Carnival Week, NO end of summer Dance or Theater Shows, NO hugs from Hampy, Honey or Lil’ Hoot, NO CIT/LIT trips or real Leadership program, NO Make A Wish at Lake Daniel with “Flying Hampy”, NO COLOR GAMES and NO “It Just Doesn’t Matter?!?!”

SSDC, and what we call “The Southampton Way”, is built on a foundation of community with a “One for All and All for One” fabric tightly woven into the summer experience. It’s when we are all brought together for the many camp wide events which lead up to the end of each season when these ideals are crystalized.

We will miss that wonderful symphony each morning as all campers and staff arrive and make their way through camp with such anticipation and excitement. Jacque and I will miss watching all of you grow up a little bit more each day this summer. We will miss that glorious laughter which explodes in all corners of camp at the most unexpected moments. We will especially miss the incredible radiant smiles when you greet us, and our pups, as we stroll through camp observing all your activities. But, perhaps most of all, we will miss just being a part of another SSDC summer with all of you, our SSDC Family.

For me, the turning point in my life came while in high school during the summer of 1966. I decided, for the first time since I was five years old, not to attend summer camp to concentrate on my main love, sports. I spent my days playing baseball for the Olney Braves, my evenings playing basketball at Sturgis playground in Philly, playing tennis for fun, and

trying to play guitar in my spare time. Being busy at things I loved was great, but something important was missing. I realized right then and there how much the summer camp experience meant to me. That one summer so long ago was my last without summer camp...until now.

If we are learning anything at all from this COVID-19 scourge it is that without our health everything else is insignificant. So please continue to be safe and smart and take good care of each other. This WILL all be over someday and when it is, we will be here for all of you. Southampton Summer Day Camp will take a "summer vacation" in 2020 but what an incredible reunion we will have when we return for summer 2021!

Many thanks to all of you for your patience as we agonizingly navigated through this process. Our deep apologies to all our campers and staff who were counting so heavily on us to brighten up their lives during this difficult time. To our LIT's, do not worry, we will not forget you for JC opportunities next summer. We graciously thank each camper, staff member and all extended family for your continued support as we turn the page and plan for the 2021 season.

As to 2020 tuition refunds and 2021 rollover options, we will be sending an email in the next few days with specific details and a **form attached** to help us process your requests as rapidly as possible. As we have always maintained, our parents are entitled to a **FULL REFUND** of all tuition payments. You will also have the **opportunity to pre-enroll for 2021 by choosing to rollover 2020 payments**. Please be kind enough to complete and submit your online form as quickly as possible.

In conclusion, there are no words to describe the sadness that Jacque and I feel for all of you, as we deliver the news of our decision. We are both trying to look forward to 2021 when we will have a chance to make it up to everyone! We all know that at SSDC we are indeed "BETTER TOGETHER." And always remember, "HAMPY LOVES YOU!"

With sincere gratitude and healthy wishes,

Rick & Jacque