



# Winter 2021

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## *Letter from the Director, Ellen Diamond.....*

As the director of Camp Ga'avah, often I find myself so busy making sure that everything is going okay, I forget to stop and breathe and appreciate the moment or the experience. This November, Ga'avah traveled to a park in Brooklyn where we did a beach clean-up to honor the life of a transgender activist, Marsha P. Johnson. I was so busy micromanaging the event that I forgot the reason that we chose that park until I saw one of our campers, Charlie, taking the time to look at and read all of the signs posted honoring Marsha P. Johnson. My Ga'avah campers continually teach and remind me what is important in this life. In these difficult times, sometimes we get so bogged down with the little things that we forget to stop, breathe, look and reflect.

The winter is an especially good time to do that. We are more naturally turned inward, the pace is a bit slower. This winter and coming year, Ga'avah is going to focus on wellness. The goal being for our campers and staff to find those things that help them to remain calm and centered. We will introduce a variety of activities and strategies to help our campers to find their inner calm. Our hope is that by the end of this program, campers will have a toolbox of ways to self regulate and will have figured out what works for them as individuals.

**Parent Panel:** This fall I was asked by the Northwell Center for Transgender Health to run a workshop on parenting gender expansive youth at their conference at Hofstra University. The workshop I put together focused on positive parenting of LGBTQ youth. We put together a panel of three parents who all have had different experiences but were united in their passion and support for their children. It was an empowering experience telling our stories to others. I want to thank Jane Rudes, Miriam Fein and Jenn Lake for opening up and giving their time to make this a truly meaningful experience.

**Groups:** We are excited to announce that we have expanded our parent and youth support groups. In addition to our monthly Thursday night groups, the Suffolk JCC has graciously allowed us to use their space for monthly Sunday morning groups. As always, while the parents meet in one room, the children are together in another room with our Ga'avah staff. Please come and join us!

I am going to end this with a shout out to our Ga'avah parents. Research has shown us that for LGBTQ youth, having a supportive parent is one of the most important factors in making sure that our children are okay. Since camp ended this summer, I have seen parents supporting each other and their kids as well as other Ga'avah kids. You are amazing!

I wish you and your loved ones a winter filled with peace and inner calm.

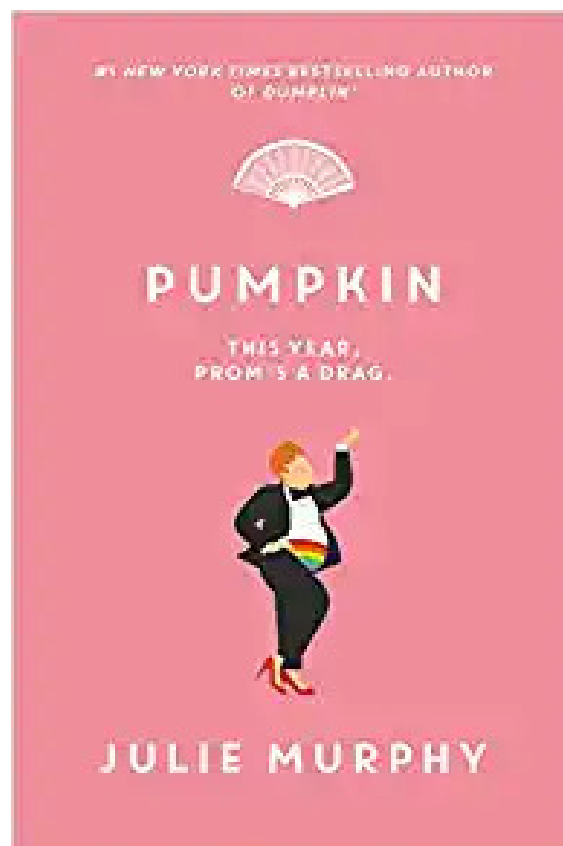
*Ellen Diamond*

Director, Camp Ga'avah

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## *Ga'avah Book Corner*

We like to recommend books that would be fun to read and also inspiring for the LGBTQ community. "Pumpkin," by Julie Murphy is a fun and entertaining book for ages 13 and up!







Our staff is also trained in Youth Mental Health First Aid, by the National Council for Well Being which is a course that addresses mental health issues and how to address them with kids and teens.



# Join us for Parent & Youth Groups

**The First Thursday of Each  
Month at 7:00 pm**

**The Friedberg JCC  
15 Neil Court, Oceanside, NY**

**Sundays (dates will be shared)**

**The Suffolk Y JCC  
74 Hauppauge Rd, Commack, NY**

**To register please visit  
[www.friedbergjcc.org/gaavah](http://www.friedbergjcc.org/gaavah)**

**QUESTIONS? EMAIL ELLEN DIAMOND AT  
[EDIAMOND@FRIEDBERGJCC.ORG](mailto:EDIAMOND@FRIEDBERGJCC.ORG)  
OR CALL 516-634-4164**



**BARRY AND FLORENCE  
FRIEDBERG  
JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER  
NATHAN & MURIEL GLANZ CAMPUS**

# CAMP GA'AVAH 2022

We are so excited to open Camp Ga'avah for our 5th summer!  
Camp will be open Tuesday, June 28- Friday, Aug 19th.  
New for summer 2022-LIT Program for ages 14-16.

**ENROLL TODAY!**  
*Limited financial assistance available*

Registration is open at [www.friedbergjcc.org/gaavah](http://www.friedbergjcc.org/gaavah)

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## Sponsor a Camper Today! Ga'avah Scholarship Fund



We aim to provide every child who wants attend camp and year round programs with the opportunity to do so! Please make a donation to the Ga'avah Scholarship Fund to help LGBTQ youth participate. Contact Stephanie Abrams at [sabrams@friedbergjcc.org](mailto:sabrams@friedbergjcc.org) to make your gift today.

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Happy Winter everyone! I am so excited for our upcoming programs we have planned for our year round schedule at Ga'avah. We have always wanted to increase our mental health space and with generous grants, we are finally able to do it. There are fantastic activities coming up that will help with our mind, body & soul and we plan to continue into the summer. Stay tuned for dates!

As always, please reach out if you need any support from the Ga'avah team. We are here to assist! Happy New Year and looking forward to



many wonderful things!

-Stephanie Abrams

she/her/hers

Director of Camping Services, Friedberg JCC

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*Thank you to our partners!*





[Elisa Waters, LMSW, elisa.waters@gmail.com](mailto:elisa.waters@gmail.com)

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Visit our website

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*Thank you to UJA Federation New York for their continued support.*

