

Reflections

A magazine for family, friends, and supporters of The Camphill School

FALL + WINTER 2025



**The
Camphill
School**

Reflections

Cover: Juno
Below: Siggi

Editor's Letter

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Time is a funny thing. The year 2022 to some may only be three short years ago, but to me it seems decades past. It seems longer to me because I am still blown away by the fact that in those three years, you, our community of supporters, have pledged and donated over \$7 million to The Camphill School and helped us surpass our Building for a Lifetime Campaign goal!

In those three years, you have enabled us to rebuild the Craft House. In less than one year from now, you will have helped us complete renovations to Woodledge and Ember and vital upgrades to our infrastructure.

What you have made and are making possible still feels a bit like a dream some days. The journey for me personally over the last three years has been life affirming. I have had the opportunity to meet so many of you incredible people and gotten to know you—our families, friends, and donors—on a deeper and more meaningful level. My cup of gratitude runneth over!

I have been emotionally moved by your belief in our faculty, staff, house parents, therapists, resident volunteers, and most especially, our students. I cannot thank all of you enough for your commitment and your generosity.

There is so much to look forward to over this school year, but the best place to begin is with sharing how much it means to have you as part of our school community. We celebrate you and can't wait to show you what your investment in the school makes possible.

From the bottom of my heart: Thank you!

Wishing you and your family a happy Thanksgiving,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Courtney Coffman".

Courtney Coffman
Editor



01 / Some of the weekend's participants from Union Theological Seminary, including Camphill Academy board member and Foundation president emerita Shelley Burt, Eric Manigian, Annie Reynolds, Alexis Morin, and Fan Lou

Middle Generation

By Shelley Burt



In July, nine visitors came to Camphill communities in Pennsylvania to spend a weekend staying in lifesharing houses, meeting residents and coworkers, and learning all about Camphill. This visit was an initiative supported by the Camphill Foundation as part of the year-long Middle Generation Outreach and Recruitment pilot project, to support Camphill communities in the region in meeting more mid-career leaders and inviting them to consider how Camphill might fit into their vocational plans.

This group was assembled based on their curiosity about Camphill, shared

values around economic justice, disability justice, land stewardship, intentional community, and spirituality. Many of the visitors are either enrolled at or are recent alumni of Union Theological Seminary. Participants have prior work experience in a range of careers, including chaplaincy, oral history storytelling, library science, writing, law, furniture design, teaching, and small-business ownership; they also represent a range of different spiritual traditions and backgrounds. Most had limited exposure to anthroposophy and Camphill before this weekend.

The group was asked some orienting questions in the lead up to their visit, including: How are we trying to live into

our values about community, inclusion, economy, and living an ethic of care in this complex political environment during a time of historic wealth inequality? What can we learn from how Camphill communities relate to resources, needs, and money? What ideas do we carry around about disability and about meaningful work?

The weekend agenda included touring Beaver Run and visiting workshops, hearing from Libby Sanders, Guy Alma, Sonja Adams, Mark Ohi, Sherry Wildfeuer, and other Camphill coworkers about anthroposophy, enjoying meals in lifesharing houses, touring Beaver Farm, weeding in Foxfield Flowers' garden, participating in

02 / The group enjoyed experiencing the Pottery workshop at Kimberton Hills with one another and villagers



a special weekend pottery workshop at Kimberton Hills, having a Bible Supper with coworkers at Kimberton Hills, and learning about the Fundamental Social Law. Participants attended Sunday service at Kimberton Hills, and the final conversation of the program invited participants to reflect on the possibilities they see for connecting Camphill to their communities and vice versa.

Since July, we've been following up with participants to learn more about their

impressions and questions, and to pursue possible collaborations ranging from placing seminary student interns at Camphill communities to planning a "reverse exchange" weekend for coworkers and residents to visit New York City and see how mid-career leaders with similar values are living those out in the Big Apple.

We hope this program marks the beginning of many more weekend visits where Millennials can learn about Camphill and

begin to form mutually transformational relationships that will eventually grow into strong mid-career coworker recruitment networks to support communities across the region.

If you are interested in participating in a weekend Camphill experience to learn more about lifesharing can reach out to Alexis Morin at spellreyn@gmail.com.

Are you 70½ or older with an IRA? Then this article is for you!

01 / David and Jillian enjoying time together



When you start the process of taking your Qualified Minimum Distribution (QMD) from your individual retirement account (IRA) this year and realize the taxes you'll have to pay, maybe think "The Camphill School" instead.

If you are at least 70½ years old, you can give up \$100,000 per year directly from your IRA to The Camphill School **without it counting as taxable income**. Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCD) are now a permanent addition to the tax code and can benefit both you and our students.

There are some rules and processes to keep in mind:

- You must be at least 70½ or older at the time of the transfer.
- You may transfer up to \$100,000 per year.
- Your distribution must come directly from a qualified IRA.

- The amount transferred is excluded from your adjusted gross income (AGI).
- Each financial institution that holds IRAs has their own paperwork and processes that you must complete.
- Always **consult your financial advisor** before making any charitable gift, including a QCD.
- The Camphill School receives the funds directly from your IRA administrator, and your name will not be relayed to us. So **if you plan to make a QCD to the school, please let us know**. We want to be able to thank you.
- When you donate from your IRA, you will be **welcomed into the Pietzner Legacy Society**.

Want to learn more or let us know you will send a QCD this year? Contact **Courtney Coffman** at 610.469.9236 x132 or ccoffman@camphillschool.org.

GIVING TUESDAY

Open the Door to Living and Learning Tuesday, December 2: #GivingTuesday

Are you as excited for #GivingTuesday as we are at The Camphill School? December 2 is your chance to unlock new opportunities for our students – through your generosity, you open the door to both living and learning.

What can YOUR gift do?

Thanks to YOUR support, we've made incredible progress on our Building for a Lifetime Campaign. But the work isn't done yet. Woodledge and Ember are under construction, and rising supply costs – especially for essentials like doors – mean we still need your help.

Our goal this #GivingTuesday is to raise \$30,000 to:

- Fund revocations to children's homes
- Provide tuition assistance
- Support student life activities like seasonal dances, Prom, festivals, and the yearbook

These experiences are more than just fun – they're foundational to the joy, growth, and community our students experience every day.

Why YOU Matter

As one of our most passionate advocates, your voice carries far. When you share our campaign – on social media, by email, or even by text – you help us reach new hearts and minds who may not yet know about the magic of The Camphill School.

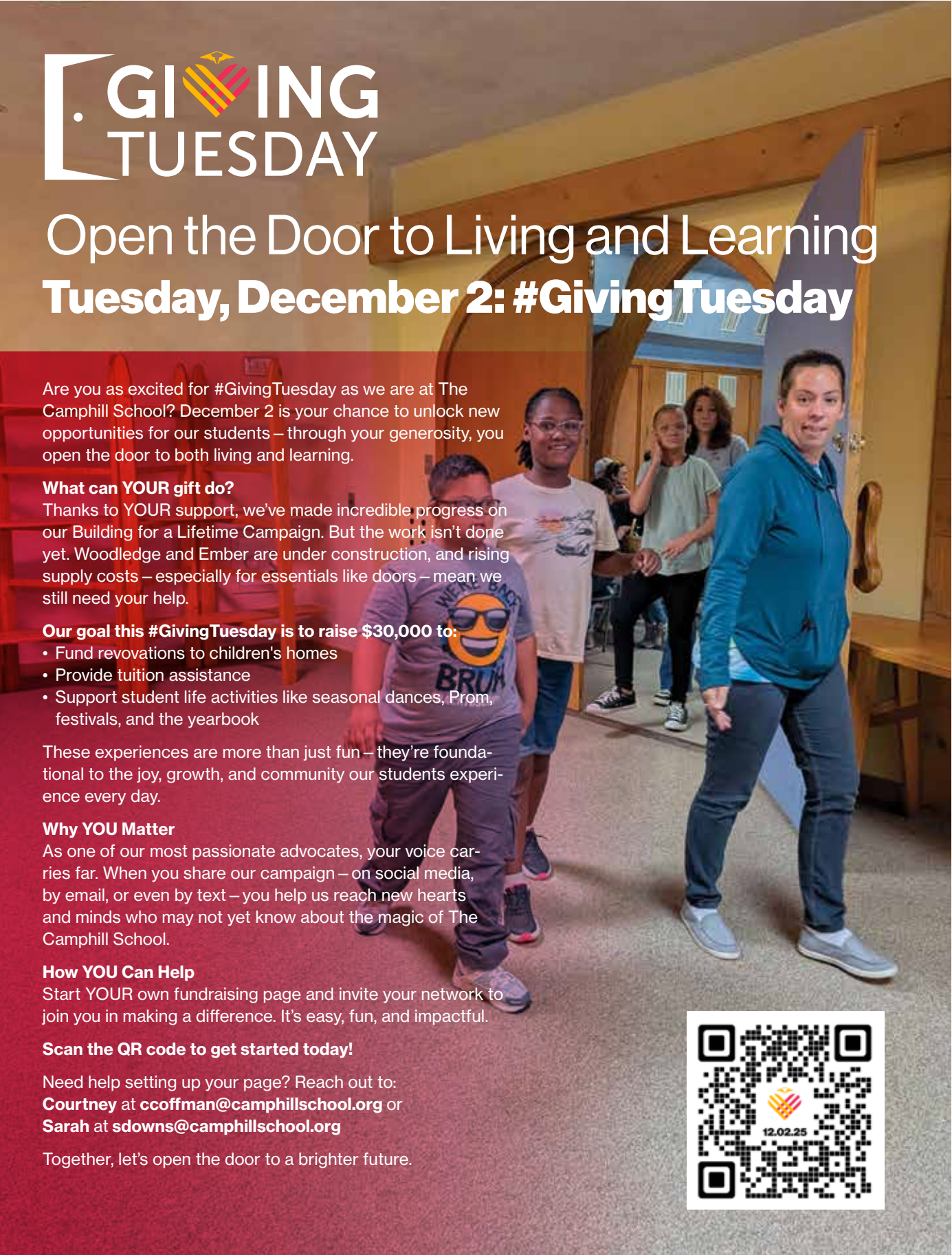
How YOU Can Help

Start YOUR own fundraising page and invite your network to join you in making a difference. It's easy, fun, and impactful.

Scan the QR code to get started today!

Need help setting up your page? Reach out to: **Courtney** at ccoffman@camphillschool.org or **Sarah** at sdowns@camphillschool.org

Together, let's open the door to a brighter future.



Extraordinary Gratitude:

Building for a Lifetime

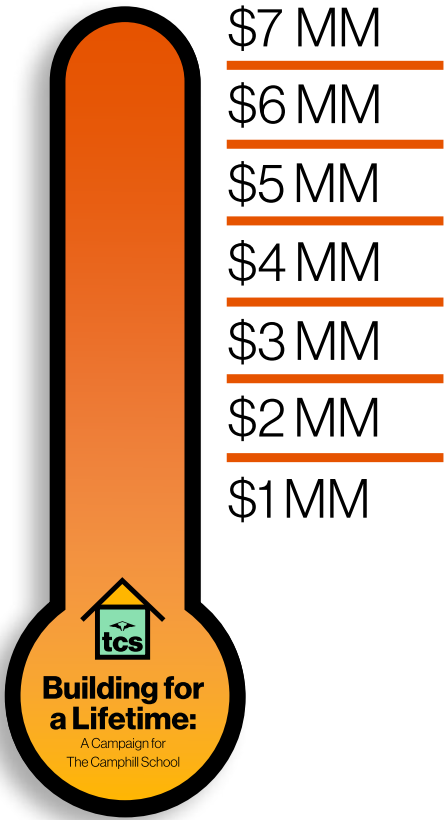


We are thrilled to announce that thanks to you, the Building for a Lifetime Campaign has EXCEEDED the \$7 million goal! The Camphill School community is beyond grateful to our supporters, families, and friends who invested their time, talents, and treasure that has and will complete vital projects on our Beaver Run campus.

Your donations over the past three years also enabled our Tuition Assistance committee to award students financial aid and general operating support that makes living and learning on both our campuses possible.

As we all bask in the success of the campaign that YOU made possible, our gratitude is endless. With this in mind, we wanted to share with you what our faculty, staff, parents, Board Members, and students are most grateful for that would not be possible without you!

The Craft House is now in its third year of operation and the students and staff continue to share what they are most grateful for in the new work areas—light, space, room to be creative, beautiful gardens, and more functional and modern equipment.



“As a cheerleader for Camphill for many years, I say ‘2, 4, 6, 8, Who Do We Appreciate? Gooooo Camphill!’ Many thanks to all our Camphill cheerleaders who contributed to the Campaign. You are extraordinary people doing extraordinary things (for our extraordinary kiddos who do extraordinary things!)”
— Sue Rushing, Camphill cheerleader, parent of student, and board member

“I am grateful that Camphill offers a place where children with differences are not only seen but supported in thriving as the unique individuals they were born to be.”
— Lindsay Hess, classroom teacher



“I am grateful for our beautiful campus that allows us a chance to connect with nature and the staff arriving every morning with cheerful smiles, ready to tackle the day’s challenges and support our wonderful students. I have so much gratitude for the diversity, inclusion, friendship, and acceptance that Camphill fosters among our students.”
— Cassidy Boston, tenth grade Special Education teacher

“I am grateful to belong to a Children’s Village, where in community everyone is learning to become a better human being from the youngest to the oldest, where we can work and celebrate inside beautiful buildings and outside in the natural environment, where arts belong to the path of transformation and healing, where the spirit of each can find itself in the light of the spirit of our time and the Being of Love.”
— Else Wolf, art therapist and longtime Camphill School community member

“At Camphill, I am thankful for the beautiful campus that inspires creativity and imagination to bloom.”
— Emily Hess, The Bridge Program class teacher



Your support makes a difference

At The Camphill School, we start a new academic year with gratitude. We often use the phrase “lives transformed” to emphasize the impact your contributions have on our students.

Your donation allows the focus to be on each student’s potential, not their family’s ability to afford tuition and boarding fees. Some of our students would not be here without your support.

“Several years ago, our family was in crisis . . .”

Thanks to your support, it’s not just the students that benefit from being at The Camphill School, but their families as well. **Will you help us continue to transform lives by making a generous donation to tuition assistance and general operating support today?**

“Having financial assistance to give our son what he needed impacts every single person in our family. Our son is thriving. He is happy and engaged and part of an amazing community . . .”

Our priority is for each child to receive individualized education, therapy, and prevocational activities that will shape their future in the years ahead.

“I will speak for myself when I say that having the ability to have my son at Camphill is literally the thing that I am most grateful for in my life. Your kindness and generosity make this possible for families like ours, and we cannot be more grateful.” —Mom of a tuition assistance recipient

Your support is an investment in the day-to-day operations of the school, including tuition assistance for families who are unable to afford the cost of their child’s education.

Will you donate today to provide students of all financial backgrounds with the educational opportunities they need to reach their full potential and prepare them for life beyond school?

Consider joining the Sustainers’ Circle by making a recurring gift. Setting up a donation that automatically renews is convenient for you and sustains the school for years to come!

You can make your gift using the enclosed envelope or by scanning the QR code.



Support The Camphill School.



01 / Heenam with Nina

To Be a Better Person

By Heenam Kim, Fourth Year Academy Student

Editor's note: The following article was adapted from a speech given by Heenam at this year's Camphill Academy opening. If after reading this, you or someone in your life is interested in studying within the context of community living, the Camphill Academy may be for you! The Academy offers practice-integrated postsecondary programs in Inclusive Social Development, with concentrations in Curative Education, Social Therapy, and Social Agriculture & Biodynamics. As a Camphill Academy student, you pay no tuition to begin earning college credits to transfer to a bachelor's degree program at one of our partner universities.

Enrollment is open for programs starting in the fall of 2026! Visit www.camphill.edu for more information and to apply.

The reason I came to the U.S. was to join Camphill Academy. I was in a Camphill in England. After one year, I was hoping to get more experience and learn about community life, but wasn't sure where it would lead. By chance, I opened a Camphill magazine, and I saw the map of all Camphill communities around the world, including Camphill Academy in the U.S. I had no idea what Camphill Academy was. Honestly, I wasn't interested in coming to the U.S. at that time. When I read the information, I thought, "This is the perfect program for me. I can be a coworker in a Camphill community and learn the background of Camphill, anthroposophy, practice art, and it is free!" Of course, I didn't expect homework and assignments! Everyone has a different reason for attending the Academy, but I am sure all our intentions are to help the future of Camphill. Thank you for holding the Academy course for us and supporting us as we unfold our potential.



Last year, I changed from Social Therapy to Curative Education. The last five years were all about learning how to live and work together in community, the essence of Camphill, and how to meet and understand others, including special needs people. It encourages me to grow through practicum, anthroposophy study, conversation, artistic practice, retreat, self-study, and more. Over the five years, I have realized it is a great opportunity to transform myself and contribute to the community.

I want to share a significant experience that I had two years ago in the Academy. I had to perform a eurythmy piece in front of the whole community for the third-year Academy celebration. I chose the poem *Sympathy* by Paul Laurence Dunbar. Over two months, I created the steps and gestures, then the teacher helped me make them better. It was a short poem and just a minute performance, but I was the

only student in my class, so I had pressure to be on stage alone. But I just tried.

After final rehearsal, my teacher asked me "Are you nervous?" Of course! But my answer was, "No. I am not nervous. I think I am already fulfilled with my work during practice. Whether I make a mistake or not is not important to me. I enjoyed our preparation, so I am already satisfied." I surprised myself! I didn't think about the answer in my head; it came from my heart. It was a special moment. After that experience, I don't have much fear of doing something in front of people. I learned the result is not that important; more important is the journey, the process, and practice to grow to be a better person. I learned it is better to encounter challenges and try to overcome them than stay in a comfort zone.

Of course, there were many more challenges. In first-year theosophy class, we

02 / Heenam along with Alex and Wenjuan presenting a puppet show with help from Bernie



had weekly assignments to read and prepare summaries. I still struggle with language, but at that time, my English was worse. I shared what I prepared, but the teacher asked me to say it again in my own words. I panicked and didn't know what to say. I started crying and couldn't stop. I had to leave the classroom and stay in the bathroom for five minutes. While I cried, I acknowledged to myself that this is me, this is my language capacity, and I can't change it immediately. I realized that I wasn't addressing my stress and was

pushing myself a lot. It was a turning point. I learned ways to relieve stress and told myself, "I can't change my English level right now, but keep practicing and try as much as I can."

These days, my focus is on how to work with children with sympathy. It is not easy to understand others' thoughts, feelings, and behavior, but we try. I want to help our students lead meaningful lives and hope I can understand what they express as I develop the capacity to understand and

communicate with them. My Academy work will help me on that journey. I am excited to start the new year with therapy practice, anthroposophy study, child study, conflict communication, art practices, and more.

To close, I want to share a Rudolf Steiner quote that helps me develop warmth and sympathy for others:

"Carry your warm hearts into the world to do powerful healing work."

Walking Into a Rainbow

By Julie Cusack, Zachary's mom



Zachary, who is now 16 years old, started at The Camphill School in kindergarten. He first attended Colebrookdale's Life Skills Classroom for two semesters and then began at The Camphill School in the spring of his kindergarten year. We called a meeting with the school district because Zachary was not successful in the public school setting, and ultimately the district agreed to fund his placement at The Camphill School.

On Zachary's first visit, he did a trial in the kindergarten classroom. Bernie met my husband and me at the car and told us to come back in a couple of hours. It was like Zachary was walking into a rainbow—so relaxed and calm with Bernie—something we had never seen before. We were nervous, but Zachary took Bernie's hand and walked away. In that moment I knew Zachary was at ease with the people and the environment, and my heart started to feel at ease too.

He attended the day program until second grade. When Zachary began having difficulty transitioning to and from the bus, along with other concerns, the school district offered to fund a residential placement. I was scared, nervous, and apprehensive to allow my son to become residential at such a young age, but it proved successful again because of the school's nurturing, warm environment. It was a bittersweet moment in my life as his mother.

Since then, Zachary has been given full and meaningful purpose in the life he was given. He is warmly welcomed every time he returns to school after a long weekend at home or a break. It has become his second home. The house parents and teachers embrace this life not as a job, but as a meaningful vocation, and I have watched Zachary grow and benefit in so many ways. He has friends and a purpose at school, which has allowed him to blossom into the person he is today.

Some of the people who have made a deep connection with Zachary—including Gleice, Jose, Michael, and Andreas, to name a few—have been strong and steady anchors for my son, and for that I am grateful. I know there are many others who have touched his life. Thank you to all of you!

Over the past ten years, the gatherings the children attend in the community have helped them build relationships and bonds that nurture their growth. Being involved in the residential program has allowed Zachary to grow and advance to a place that is preparing him for adulthood. Zachary thrives on relationships and definitely has "his people," as we call them. He can be cautious with new people until they prove their safety and predictability.

The Children's Village is a place where Zachary can live and be involved in an accepting and loving environment. The school and residential homes are a family that has earned my trust. Leaving your child in the care of others is not taken lightly by any parent, but I have been able to do that with my son at The Camphill School for the past ten years. When Zachary came to the school many years ago, he was unsettled in a big and scary world. Now he is grounded and secure in himself and his world. I am so grateful to all the staff for providing a nurturing, safe environment.



THE CAMPHILL SCHOOL CHRISTMAS MARKET

WHEN: SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6TH

FROM: 10AM-2PM

WHERE: FOXFIELD BARN

701 W 7 STARS RD

PHOENIXVILLE, PA

19460



- FOXFIELD FLOWERS WREATHS & PRODUCTS
- STUDENT ART, TEA BLENDS, ORNAMENTS, FARM PRODUCTS, POTTERY, & WOVEN ITEMS
- COFFEE & BAKED GOODS
- LIVE MUSIC AND CHRISTMAS CHOIR
- SPECIAL GUEST VENDORS
- BUY LOCAL AND SUPPORT OUR MISSION!

PLEASE JOIN US!

Art by Ella Skye





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FSC LOGO HERE

PLEASE JOIN US

Dec. 2	#GivingTuesday – Open the doors to living and learning (see page 7)
Dec. 6	Beaver Farm Christmas Market (see page 15)
May 9	Farm Fest and Mother's Day Flower Market at Foxfield Barn
May 29	Foxfield Al Fresco – 2026 Camphill Gala (see page 11)

VISIT CAMPHILLSCHOOL.ORG FOR MORE DETAILS ABOUT ALL EVENTS.

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The Camphill School's mission is to create wholeness for children and youth with developmental disabilities through education, extended family living, and therapy so that they may be better understood, they may more fully unfold their potential, and they may meaningfully participate in life.

The Camphill School does not discriminate on the basis of race, age, color, creed, gender, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin, religion, or disability.



HELP THE CAMPHILL SCHOOL CONSERVE RESOURCES.

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Join the growing ranks of the Pietzner Legacy Society by naming our supporting foundation, Beaver Run Foundation, in your will or other estate plans. Call Courtney Coffman at 610.469.9236 x132 for more information.

