

# Louis August Jonas Foundation

## 2021-2027 Strategic Plan

### Starting point:

We believe that Camp Rising Sun and the Louis August Jonas Foundation remain highly relevant in today's world. Wherever you look, young leaders are emerging. We have a responsibility to our mission to try and reach as many young future leaders as our means enable us to, to teach them the values of compassionate and ethical leadership. The plan outlined in the pages following centers on our mission and purpose as an organization, and on maximizing the impact of our core program, Camp Rising Sun.

The mission of the Louis August Jonas Foundation is to develop in promising young people a commitment to ethical leadership for the betterment of the world. Our certificate of incorporation describes that the purpose of the LAJF is to “establish, maintain and operate (but not for profit) a camp or camps or other programs for young people,” emphasizing that our mission and purpose is not limited to running a summer camp program.

As we embark on the next five years, we note that our starting point includes the following:

- Consistent, high-quality delivery of a 4-week CRS program on Clinton campus.
- Successful, proven operation of virtual programming across two summers.
- Successful pilots of fee-based virtual programs.
- A talented, high-performing tenured staff team.
- Maintenance and updates to the Clinton campus completed with some deferred maintenance remaining.
- An investment portfolio at ~\$13.4M and an average endowment draw of <5% in the last five years.
- Fundraising higher than expected in 2021 due to CIVD-19; strong foundation for growing our development efforts.

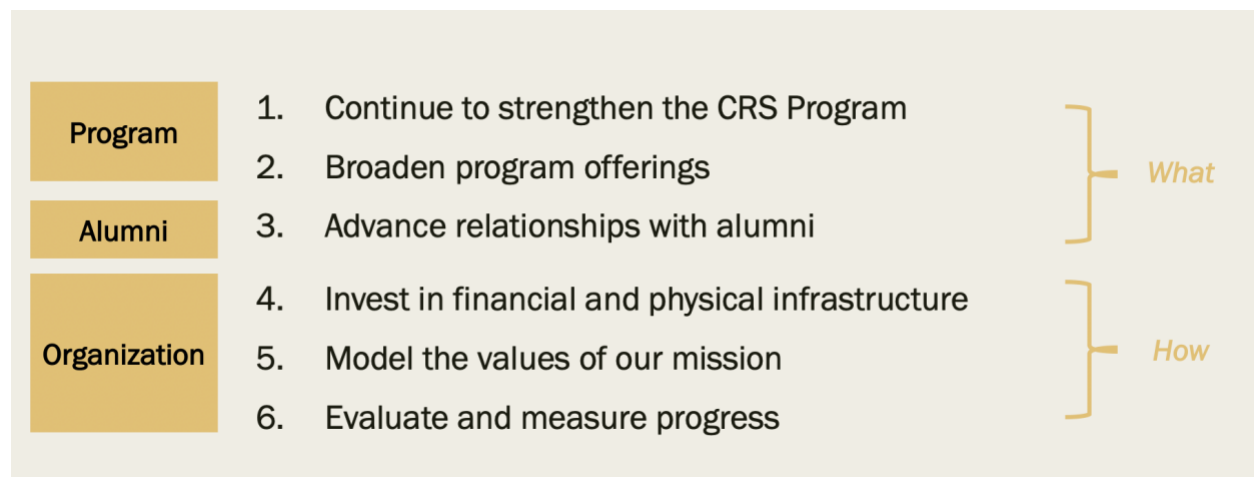
On the basis of the recent, organic growth that we have seen in the past five years, driven by an engaged and qualified staff, we believe that we face a unique, positive opportunity for expansive growth. The world needs the type of leadership that we instill in young people. Growing our program offerings and diversifying our streams of revenue will help sustain Camp Rising Sun and our broader operations in the longer run, ensuring the continued impact of our mission on the world.

## The process:

The elements of this plan are the results of the hard work, creativity and love for CRS of dozens of our alumni and supporters. Over the past 18 months, more than 80 volunteers have assisted the Strategic Planning Committee – through focus groups, critical analysis, task-force work-shops and more – to create our strategic plan. The result of those efforts is what follows.

## The Six Key Pillars of the Plan:

The plan consists of Six Core Pillars. The pillars are as follows:



## Pillar 1 Continue to strengthen the CRS program

Camp Rising Sun remains an innovative, high-quality educational experience. In the past five years, we have formalized central programmatic aspects and strengthened our curriculum and core program. We have focused, and will continue to focus, on evolving our programming to reflect the importance of contemporary world matters, e.g. climate change and social justice.

Each year, hundreds of qualified and deserving candidates apply to attend Camp Rising Sun. In the coming five years, to broaden our reach and increase the impact of Camp Rising Sun, we aim to incrementally increase the number of campers in each session, from 65 today to 80 in five years. We

will continue to assess and monitor our program to ensure that we have the right number of attendants, while ensuring prudent and continued upkeep of our facilities to support the growth in number of campers.

## Pillar 2 Broaden our program offerings

A central part of our plan for the next five years is to broaden our program offerings, increasing our reach of new populations and impact on the world, through the ecosystem of programs at the LAJF. The programs will be based on the values and pedagogy of Camp Rising Sun, and will yield further benefits to our organization and programs as a whole, while also serving youth as independent programs.

**At an incremental and scalable pace, we will develop and implement the following three programs:**

### Middle-school program:

The middle school program will be a one to two-week program, modelled after core program Camp Rising Sun. The program will strengthen our ability to serve our mission by introducing participants to the CRS model and pedagogy, in a manner that is developmentally appropriate for the age-group. The program will target and work with middle-school-aged students in New York State to develop compassionate and responsible leadership skills. Our recruitment efforts will specifically target students from low-income communities, and the program will become a conduit for participants to attend Camp Rising Sun. Our long-term goal is for the program to be financially self-sustained through funding from grants and sponsorships.

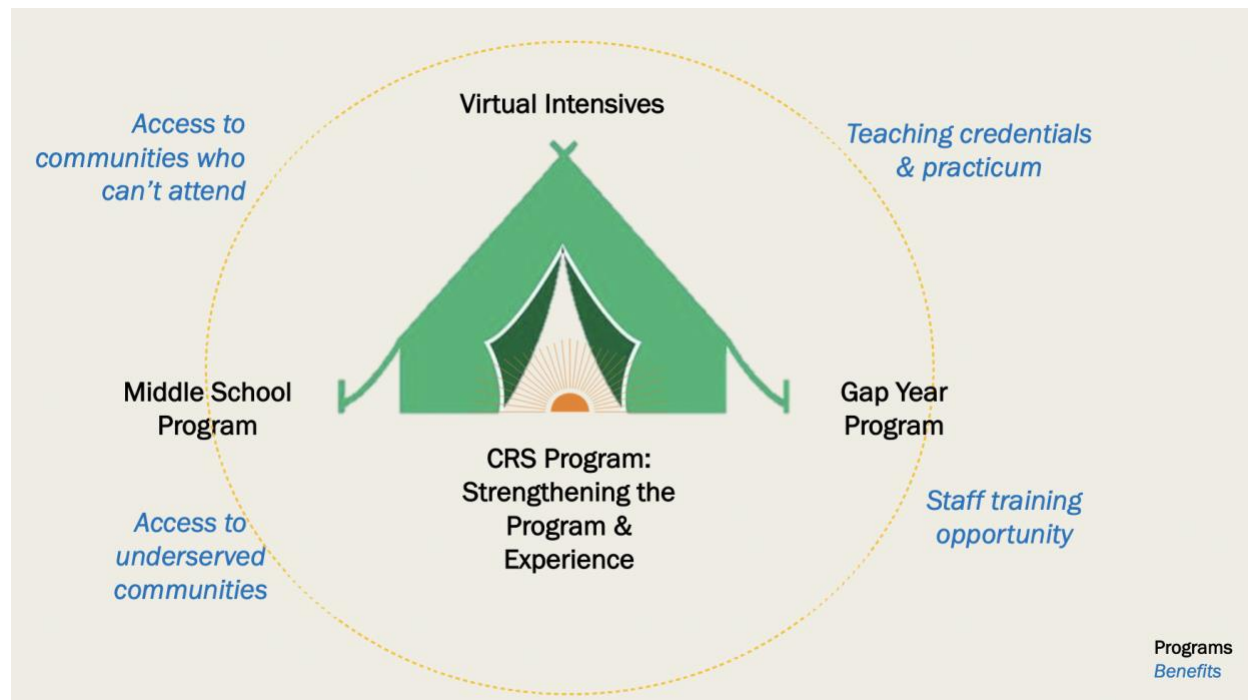
### Gap-year program:

Our Gap-Year Program is an educator training and leadership fellow program. Piloted with 12-15 participants, aged 18-25, the program will be semester-long (potentially longer), and will be aimed at teaching participants the pedagogy and educational model of Camp Rising Sun, while working hands-on with the implementation of virtual education programs. The program will include both virtual and in-person learning, offering the opportunity to utilize our Rhinebeck campus year-round. Beyond the ripple-effect of teaching our values and methodology to future educators, this fee-based program will prepare a deeper “talent bench” of individuals to join our team of staff, implementing our other youth programs. With more adults trained in our program model, they will be advocates in their professional fields to help advance the mission of the LAJF, for the betterment of the world.

### Virtual Programs:

Our virtual education programs are grounded in the same mission and pedagogy as the core Camp Rising Sun program. International youth aged 16-18 from around the world are eligible to participate in the newly offered virtual programs that were piloted during the summer of 2021. Centered on topics such as Climate Change and Sustainability, Social Justice, and Technology, Science and

Humanity, our fee-based “Intensives” encourage critical thinking, self-reflection, global understanding and youth empowerment. Our Virtual CRS program, piloted in 2020 and 2021 in lieu of in-person programs, will continue as an independent program, additionally allowing us to cast a wider geographical net and reach more students.



### Pillar 3 Advance relationship with Alumni

Our community of more than 6,000 alumni living in nearly 100 different countries, continues to play a vital role in the success of our organization and the impact of our mission on the world. Our alumni share the unique experience of having attended Camp Rising Sun, where they were exposed to a set of shared values. Connecting our alumni around these shared values through intentional and educational programming, as well as social networking and reunions, allows us to bolster the impact of Camp by supporting our alumni in ‘living the mission’.

In the coming five years we will focus on a) content driven alumni programming, b) supporting young alumni and c) events, reunions and community building activities. This strategy combines the efforts that we have undertaken for many years, as well as newer initiatives, started in the last one to two years.

**Content Driven Alumni Programming:** We will continue to offer virtual programming and formalizing networking through internship opportunity sharing, alumni mentorship committee and professional panel events.

**Programming focused on supporting young alumni:** We will continue to offer resources to our young alumni as they embark on new experiences and journeys. We will further our college-guidance

program and offer new opportunities centered around mentorship and professional networking. We will also extend our Fellowship program.

**Events, Reunions and community building:** We will continue to nurture and develop our global alumni community. We will host annual reunions, fundraising events and publish routine communications and the annual Sundial to connect our global community.

## Pillar 4

A successful implementation of the strategic plan will require substantial investments in our infrastructure, facilities and staff, and will mean an increase in spending year over year. The plan suggests a 5-year period of tempered and organic growth, with tolerable, planned and monitored risk, as we invest in our ability to further achieve our mission. We will focus on co-funding the improvements where possible. In partnership with the Finance and Investment committee, a robust financial model was developed and used by the Board to assess different outcomes and scenarios. Upon approval of the plan, the model was refined to use for continuous financial planning, as we monitor our progress.

A part of the approved investments in our ability to further achieve our mission is an investment in our infrastructure. The Board has approved strategic investments into both the Clinton and Red Hook campus – such as renovating the Pool at both campuses, as well as select indoor spaces at Red Hook - to increase the utility of our campuses for current and future programming, as well as position us for increased revenue from renting out the properties when not in use for our programs.

So far, our annual operational budget has been financed solely through individual giving and annual withdrawals from our investment portfolio. This leaves few levers for our staff to control, when striving for financial sustainability and programmatic continuity. As a small non-profit, we have operated leanly and we have previously missed critical opportunities for investing in our infrastructure and staff that would help ensure long-term sustainability. In the coming five years we aim to:

**Reduce the dependency on our investment portfolio and strict draw limitations through increased fundraising and revenue diversification, specifically:**

- Our ability to achieve our mission is directly tied to our fundraising efforts, and the proposed plan includes ambitious goals for increasing our overall fundraising significantly. We aim to do so by developing our fundraising infrastructure through a multi-year partnership with a professional fundraising consulting agency, “Growth for Good”.
- Develop fee-based and grant-based funding options for new and existing programs to co-fund where possible.
- Make strategic and prudent investments in our properties to allow for increased revenue from rental use of property.

**Maximize the use of our physical assets by:**

- Capital improvements on Clinton site to support programming.
- Capital improvements on Red Hook to support additional program use and generate rental income.

**Expanding our staff infrastructure by:**

- Appropriate phasing of additional program staff as new programs are implemented.

## Pillar 5 Model the values of our mission throughout our organization

It is important that our organization reflects the values of our mission. In the coming five years, we will pursue expansive diversity among our staff, Board and committee members and evaluate our governance in context of our mission. We will seek input from alumni from marginalized communities to guide our alumni programming and revise central elements of our program implementation such as camper selection, curriculum documents and staff training.

## Pillar 6 Evaluate and measure progress

As we operationalize the plan and implement the new initiatives, we will closely monitor and evaluate our progress across key success criteria for each of the 6 pillars.

For each of the core pillars, the Strategic Planning Committee will evaluate core metrics and share updates with the Board of Directors to assess our progress on the plan. A process for ensuring timely and routine assessment has been developed. The evaluation of our progress will be used to guide the on-going implementation and help us pace the operationalization to ensure the continued success and long-term sustainability of our organization and programs.

## Thank you to those involved

As mentioned in the introduction, the content of this plan is the result of countless hours that more than 80 volunteers have given to LAJF in the past 18 months. We are incredibly grateful for the help, support and advice that we have received – we are proud of the ambitious plan that we present to our community of supporters, and excited to begin the journey with each of you!

### Thank you to those involved:

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